A. FELDSTEIN
Jan. 1954

THIS ISSUE IS DEDICATED TO RAY BRADBURY

SQUA TRONT

Kenneth Smith

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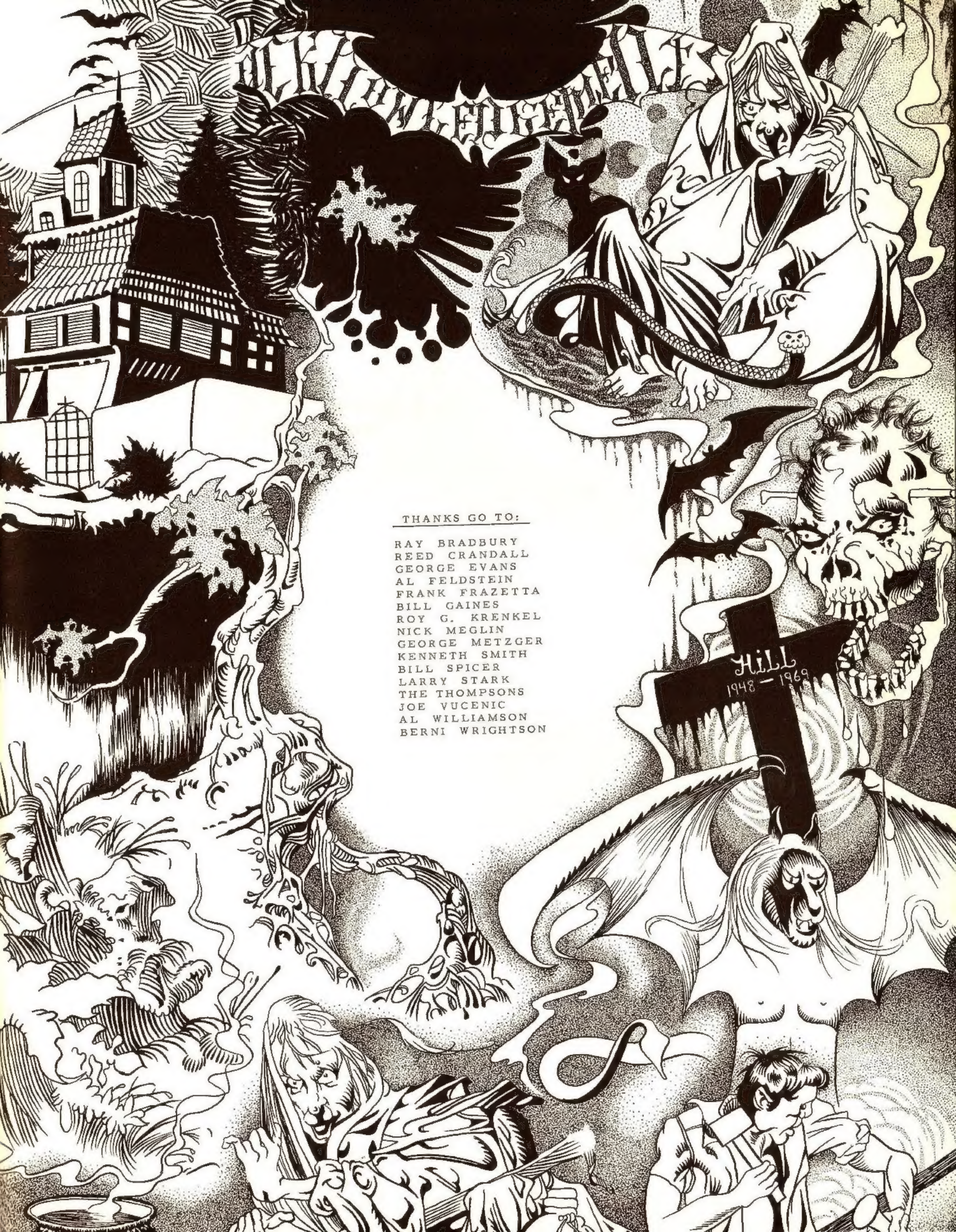

THANKS GO TO:

RAY BRADBURY
REED CRANDALL
GEORGE EVANS
AL FELDSTEIN
FRANK FRAZETTA
BILL GAINES
ROY G. KRENKEL
NICK MEGLIN
GEORGE METZGER
KENNETH SMITH
BILL SPICER
LARRY STARK
THE THOMPSONS
JOE VUCENIC
AL WILLIAMSON
BERNI WRIGHTSON

If I were to say to each and every fan that now holds this third issue of SQUA TRONT in his hands, "We, the staff, are deeply proud of this, our effort," I would be expressing the feelings of everyone connected with this endeavor. Each issue has been a step closer to the dream that was once envisioned, almost three years ago. Each issue has witnessed change, on a large scale. To every fan today who feels that SQUA TRONT is a phenomenon in fandom --- I would say this .... consistency, labor, patience, sacrifice, imagination - these are only a few of the values that each staff member has struggled with to bring SQUA TRONT into reality. Whatever excellence we have achieved has been laboriously gained.

I need not review the contents of this issue -- it speaks for itself. If anyone questions why something was done, I would ask him to look a little deeper, a little harder, and he will most likely find an answer.

I think one thing should be made clear. SQUA TRONT is dying. This issue will be the last - unless you want to see one more. My expenses for this issue amounts to a staggering $2,200. If this is not paid off in 30 days, then our hopes of putting out SQUA TRONT #4 in July-August of this summer are destroyed. Because of demands at college, I will have to lay down my intense loyalty and love for this magazine, and apply it to my major. Only two months remain for me to devote my energies to so enormous a task. In financing SQUA TRONT #3, we hope one fourth of the cost will come from subscriptions, one fourth from dealers, and one fourth from conventions this summer ----BUT the life or death of SQUA TRONT #4 lies in whether each and every one of you now reading this feels he can turn around and reorder #3 at its market price - $2.00 .... immediately! Think I'm fooling? Well, take the road of indifference - and there will be no #4. Take the road of concern - and there will. No contribution is too small or too large -- I leave it to every fan to do his utmost to give us help when we need it most....now! Tell your friends about SQUA TRONT....and reorder.

If #4 comes out, we can promise it will be better than #3.....for it will be a final statement for us and I can assure you we will want it to be the best. The next issue will cost more, and we need money now....and fast. This is the biggest problem to be conquered.

However, to move from the important to the essential.... Special thanks goes to Bill Spicer for letting us use the Feldstein oil after both editors of GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE and SQUA TRONT had gotten permission to use the same piece of artwork.

Gratitude can't be expressed enough to the pros who have projected us so far, so quickly -- Al Williamson, Reed Crandall, Al Feldstein, Bill Gaines, and Harvey Kurtzman -- all have gone far out of their way to help us. Exceptional mention should be given to George Evans for his immense contribution to this issue. Nick Meglin has furthered our ability to be versatile and unique with his outstanding article.

Also, there are the fans who are the core of every development: George Metzger, for continued support; Berni Wrightson, for admirable work; Kenneth Smith, for devotion undeserved; Larry Stark, for his reflections; Joe Vucenic, for moral support. The list goes on and on.

A warm thanks to Frank Frazetta who would have given us an unpublished painting but for unforeseen developments with Warren Publications. You may not think so, Frank, but the thought does count a lot.

For the staff, one mention in particular should be made. Besides the job of publisher and controlling editor, there is only one other position that accounts for more unheralded and unrecognized work -- that of our Secretary, Elaine Trefethen. All the labors of our other staff members are self-evident. But try to imagine the work involved in editing all copy for correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. Then typing drafts, and revised drafts, then again typing her "justified margin" draft - and finally - typing the completed pages for the photo negatives. Due to the extremely tight schedule of our Printer, Elaine has often spent up to 14 hours each day at the keyboard of her I.B.M. "Executive" typewriter (I think she, by this time, knows almost every printed word herein verbatim!). So...take another look... without Elaine, our job would have been virtually impossible.

Information on back issues and subscriptions is as follows: No #1 - ! Issue #2 is still available for $1.50. Issue #3 - market price, $2.00. ONLY subscribers got it for original $1.00. #4 will also be $2.00. Do not subscribe beyond #4 - we won't exist beyond that number. If #4 never comes out, subscriptions will be returned.

Final credits should be given to Kenneth Smith for the heading of this editorial; and Roger Hill for the acknowledgments page artwork. Roger is also responsible for the "mysterious" HAUNT OF FEAR #29 cover in SQUA TRONT #2.

Hoping this issue will meet fandom's expectations, and fandom will meet ours,

Best,

That which is unique and worthwhile
in us makes itself felt only in flashes.
If we do not know how to catch and
savor these flashes, we are without
growth and without exhilaration.
ERIC HOFFER

The epoch; any event or time of an event that marks the beginning of a relatively new development. Today's generation of young comic book fans along with organized fandom find that the subject matter and direction of comic books are geared to what the publishers sense is the "moving sales factor" in their publications. The Second Heroic Age is gone, and with its going is the expectation of a slight depression in the sales of the comics. However, today the comic book publisher has a history to refer to since various phases have seen birth and death since the advent of the FUNNIES. From the archives of reprinted newspaper strips, to the first Golden Age, to the Crime and Horror era, to the ultra-fantastic that Marvel has personified; the comics have been exploited to their utmost. What is unique about the comics prior to the 1960's is the fact that their conception and production many times entailed the development of an entirely new technique or idea. One high example? -- the 3-D comic book. Regrettably, today the comics have to fight both for originality, and with reality, for the attention of their readers. A child can pick up TIME magazine and read about Anders, Borman, and Lovell, finding as much wonder and thrill as he could in any FANTASTIC FOUR or BATMAN comic book. Thus, the comic book industry is resorting more and more to sensationalism.

Sensationalism, in a sense, was affecting the comic book industry in the late 1940's. Crime comic books were filling the newsstands with the stupendous "Crime" story. The publishers were desperately in search of a new Trend into which they could mold their titles. World War II was over, and it was too late in the day for the "super hero" comic book. By 1948, the comic book industry was forced to admit that the first Heroic Age was over. During a lull, one will always find a large amount of experimentation on the part of the publisher. In 1948, new ideas were being kicked around occasionally, although it seemed to stand as fact that there was some money and sales in the Crime and Western comic. Many publishing houses were increasing their number of Crime and Western titles by the month. One publisher in particular was doing an intense amount of experimentation. Bill Gaines, who had just stepped into the Comic Book industry due to the death of his father, M. C. Gaines, was delving into the many aspects that a comic book format could present. In 1948 and 1949, E. C. Publications issued such titles as "MOON GIRL" - "SADDLE JUSTICE" - "MODERN LOVE" and "WAR AGAINST CRIME." Ranging from romance, to adventure, to crime, to a tinted Science Fiction type of Super Heroine in Moon Girl, the E. C. line was, at best, average. Yet these titles evoked a certain respect in their appearance -- even at this early date E. C. was acutely concerned with their layout and quality. However, these titles, although showing the early signs of what was later to develop, were none the less very crude. In comparison with other companies such as Fiction House and D. C. Publications, E. C. was still in its early stages of growth. Yet this company had something the others lacked -- empathy of their problems and needs.

Remembering back to the summer of 1967, I can recall Bill Gaines saying that during these years Al Feldstein and himself had been ponderously searching for something fresh and new. The real break for them was, first--the evolving of THE VAULT KEEPER; second--THE CRYPT KEEPER; and last--THE OLD WITCH. "We knew immediately that we had something in them," Bill said. "The response was trickling at first - then the mail came in bundles!!" Yes, a breakthrough had been made - and the comic book industry was in for a drastic and quick change in its aims. 1950 also saw the advent of two other new E. C. titles. Their conception was not entirely unique as with THE OLD WITCH, THE CRYPT KEEPER and THE VAULT KEEPER....this type of subject matter had been handled before in the comics. These two new titles would see the same spark of success in their early history, then sink into oblivion because of poor sales.....not Dr. Wertham. They were the E. C. Science Fiction comics.

The May-June, 1950 issue of WEIRD SCIENCE - even in its feel, was different than anything the comic book reader had seen before. The size of the comic was relatively the same, yet the cover stood out

from the others with a new format design, the small box to the left with "SCIENCE" pouring up from the bottle - and the distinct and clear pen-work of AL FELDSTEIN. Opening the cover, the reader noticed to the left a large full-page ad for HAUNT OF FEAR #15 (issue No. 1), and to the right, something very, very different.....embossed in the black of space, "LOST IN THE MICROCOSM" stared out at the reader's eyes. Harvey Kurtzman wrote and illustrated his early work for E.C.; many times today looking back and commenting that they were just playthings. Plaything or whatever, the story in its progression made the reader aware that this was something seemingly of a new style and technique in its story execution. Following was "Dream of Doom" illustrated by Wally Wood and, though in his early stages, Wood accomplished a striking job. "Experiment In Death" by Jack Kamen was placed third under the blocked title of "An Eerie-Science SuspenStory!" The cover artist, Al Feldstein, ended the issue with "Things From Outer Space!" - a story of three-eyed aliens sent to infiltrate the Earth, divide and conquer. These four stories were to be "typicals" of the early E.C. s-f titles, with their fantastic play upon the possibilities of science gone wild, the invading aliens, the catastrophic effects of a World War III, and occasional satirical notes by Harvey Kurtzman. "Murder In The 21st Century" and "The Dark Side of The Moon," both one-page script stories, show E.C.'s willingness to give its buyers more reading matter than ads.

WEIRD FANTASY May-June, 1950 offered much the same array in its cover by Feldstein and contents illustrated by Feldstein, Wood, Kamen, and Kurtzman.

A pattern was set that would grow and mature - and this pattern did have its roots. PLANET COMICS published by Fiction House had in indirect ways been the predecessor of WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY. Ingles was present in PLANET with issues 27-31, and was also the last artist to do the strip "Auro, Lord of Jupiter." George Evans did "Lost World" for PLANET COMICS 50-64. Three years prior to the advent of the two E.C. s-f titles, Graham Ingles held the editorship at Standard Publication's STARTLING COMICS and WONDER COMICS. These two titles (refer to SQUA TRONT #1, page 16, for cover of STARTLING COMICS with Graham Ingles cover) were much on the same line of PLANET in that their Space Adventures were slanted toward the soap opera plot arrangement, with spots of the Super Hero. Some combination! "Lance Lewis, Space Detective" could be read in the same issue as "The Fighting Yank." However, these early STARTLING and WONDER comics did host covers by Graham Ingles that are the nearest thing to what E.C. ever did. Ingles' bizarre linework and draftsmanship was evident even at this time, four years before he would master the style that would make him famous with his work for HAUNT OF FEAR and THE OLD WITCH.

The pattern grew, though slowly. WEIRD FANTASY #2 (#14, July-August) and WEIRD SCIENCE #2 (#13, July-August) were much the same in the premiere issues although many fans mistook each title as being well into its development because of the numbering. WEIRD SCIENCE continued its numbering from SADDLE ROMANCES; and WEIRD FANTASY was formerly known as A MOON...A GIRL... ROMANCE. These numbering continuations were a method to save money, E.C. explained; but the Post Office cracked down on them and by their 6th and 7th issues they were carrying the proper numbering.

By their third issues, W.V. and W.S. were firmly fixed in an arrangement that would last for some time...Feldstein on the covers, lead story, and most of the editorial work. "COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE" was started -- a letter column that the editors used for more direct communication to the fans. The third issue of both titles carried a corresponding message to the readers: "We, the editors of WEIRD FANTASY (or WEIRD SCIENCE, being the issue at hand), wish to take this opportunity to thank EACH of you who have written to us commending us for publishing THIS....our "New Trend" magazine! We realize that, as far as "comic" magazines are concerned, we are the PIONEERS in the field of SCIENCE-FICTION; and your overwhelming response to our efforts, as proven both by thousands of letters and MOST satisfying sales reports, inspires us to CONTINUE to give you the VERY best in this fascinating new sphere of entertainment!" And so they were a success. For their sheer originality, W.S. and W.F. rocketed on the sales charts at E.C. The fans were much taken with the artwork of Al Feldstein at this time....."Dear Editors: Hey, you guys! That 'Cosmic Ray Bomb' story in WEIRD FANTASY #14 was really stupendous!" Bill Gaines observed, "There was something about Al's clean inkwork that made him an immediate success with the fans. His ideas were well executed and very quickly understood. The fourth issues bore this out when E.C. began tabulating the popularity of the prior issue's stories. First, let's dispose of the voting on the stories in the

WEIRD FANTASY
AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
NO. 13 MAY-JUNE
10¢
CONFORMS to the COMICS CODE
INTRODUCING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES..
FANTASTIC SUSPENSTORIES
WE DARE YOU TO READ!
ROGER HARVEY, WE HAVE KEPT YOUR BRAIN ALIVE FOR FIVE MONTHS SINCE YOUR FATAL ACCIDENT! I REALIZE THAT EVERYTHING HAS BEEN A DARK VOID FOR YOU FOR WHAT MUST HAVE SEEMED AN ETERNITY... BUT NOW, IF OUR CALCULATIONS ARE CORRECT, YOU CAN HEAR ME! IN A FEW MONTHS, WHEN WE HAVE PERFECTED THE PROPER EQUIPMENT, WE HOPE TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO SEE! AND EVENTUALLY, WE WILL PRESENT YOU WITH A NEW ELECTRONIC-MECHANICAL BODY! SO HAVE PATIENCE AND DON'T GIVE UP HOPE!
ELDSTEIN

WEIRD SCIENCE
AN ENTERTAINING COMIC
10¢
CONFORMS to the COMICS CODE
INTRODUCING A NEW TREND IN MAGAZINES..
SCIENTIFIC SUSPENSTORIES
WE DARE YOU TO READ!
GOOD LORD, KARL ... YOU'RE SHRINKING RAPIDLY... AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU! YOU WILL SOON FIND YOURSELF IN A WORLD THAT NO MAN HAS EVER SEEN .. A MICROCOSM OF MOLECULES... ATOMS... ELECTRONS AND PROTONS' AND THEN .. YOU WILL CONTINUE TO SHRINK... SHRINK INTO .. INTO... WHAT? WHAT WILL YOU FIND, KARL?
ELDSTEIN

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last issue. Feldstein's 'Destruction of The Earth' was the most popular....which clearly demonstrates that the type of story you science-fiction fiends like most is the 'ultimate catastrophe' yarn." At this time, clearly it was - and E.C. meant to please. Kurtzman also received immense popularity for his artwork and writing.

The fourth issue of W.S. carried a rarity in that Graham Ingles illustrated a story - "House in Time." Soon Ingles would be recognized in the horror line, and until the demise of the new trend, turned out strip after strip of "The Old Witch." The most important thing that could be noticed in the Nov-Dec (#4) issue of W.S. was the small ad displaying the cover of TWO-FISTED TALES #18 (#1, 1950), since this magazine had Kurtzman as its editor and FRONTLINE COMBAT was soon to come into existence --there would be a slow drain--and then, no Kurtzman at all in the Science Fiction titles.

The year 1950 ended, and the year 1951 began. With it, W.F. and W.S. remained much the same--Feldstein still out front with covers and lead stories. "Return" - however - gave readers a clear look at what Wally Wood could do with pen and brush, and a new feeling for the E.C. s-f titles was soon to be seen. Wally was writing the stories that he was illustrating at this time.

Once again, the polls proved what everyone was thinking. WEIRD FANTASY #17 (#5 Jan-Feb) rated, "Wally Wood's epic, A TRIP TO A STAR, brought for the first time to this talented writer-artist top honors. Your mail, by far and away, proved his story to be the most popular. In this issue, Woody scores again with the exciting and thought-provoking DEADLOCK!"

"Deadlock" was very well done -- the story of two aliens meeting each other in deep space, recognizing the fact that if one or the other were to turn around and return home with the other tracking the progress of the opposite ship - the danger of attack on the home planet would be immense. The reader flashes from the Human ship to the Alien ship swiftly as the story is developed, and before translated communication can be made between the two, the earth ship receives a message.....SQUA-TRUNT! SPA-FON! BUELL-BAH! (Editor's note: SQUA-TRUNT was refined to SQUA-TRONT in the later E.C. s-f magazines!) The alien ships finally come to the conclusion that one will have to destroy the other for the safety of each ships' race; however, they both launch missles and simultaneously destroy each other!

W.S. #6 carried one of Feldstein's best - "Spawn of Venus" (later to be adapted and redone by Wally Wood for the special E.C. s-f 3-D comic). This story was a tour de force of how Al could handle the plot action and panel progression in complete harmony. The #6 issues still carried Kurtzman, W.F. #6 showing Harvey's ever growing concern with satire and humor in the comic strip with "The Dimension Translator."

W.S. #7 hosted a beautiful Feldstein cover - one of his best - and featured inside "Monster From The Fourth Dimension" by Feldstein; "Something Missing" by the now well-established E.C. artist, Jack Kamen; "Gregory Had A Model-T!" by Kurtzman (Harvey's last story for the s-f mags and, ironically, one of the most humorous and satirical); and the excellent "Aliens" by Wallace Wood. Wood was now beginning to perfect a style that had been long in the making. It might be wise here to take a break from the regular development of the W.F. and W.S. titles and regress shortly in time to when Wally Wood and Joe Orlando were working together and singly - while freelancing at other comic book houses. Wally Wood had spent some time under Will Eisner, and the development of Wally's rendition of children, along with his entire concept of space visualization, was affected very much by the knowledge and craft that was Eisner. When Wally began freelancing, he had not perfected his inking abilities and during this time worked around and with Joe Orlando and Sid Check who were at the same time starting to polish their abilities too. There is a great amount of Wood artwork that can be found outside of the E.C. s-f titles in the years 1950 and 1951. Wally illustrated a few SPIRITS near the end of the Sunday Sections of THE SPIRIT. One was, in fact, extremely handsome.

AMAZING ADVENTURES #1, 1950, carries a 9-page story signed by Wallace Wood and titled "Winged Death On Venus." This story is the stereotype of an E.C. s-f story visually - with green men, monsters, space helmeted humans, and deep dark jungles of a foreign world. CAPTAIN SCIENCE #4 displays a fantastic cover by Wally Wood and Joe Orlando - signed OW. Inside are two Captain Science

stories which show that by June 1951 Wally Wood was more than ready for E. C. This issue is without a doubt some of Wood's best work outside E. C. It is also very possible that Orlando worked with Wood on inside stories too, but this is not a confirmed fact.

CAPTAIN SCIENCE #5 carries another beautiful cover done by the OW team, with two interior stories --both showing more evidence that Joe Orlando was developing his inking techniques along with Wood. DARK MYSTERIES #1 June-July 1951 has a cover signed OW, with an inside story that is most likely by Orlando. DARK MYSTERIES #2 carries another cover which is undoubtedly a combination of the two.

AVON COMICS saw witness to much of Wood and Orlando in the year 1951. EERIE #2 is a perfect example of what the E. C. Horror comics would have been like if they had had Wood as a regular. This cover is signed by Wally. EERIE #3 features a cover possibly by the two. Both EERIE #2 and #3 also had inside cover inserts that were definitely Wood, along with a story each that is unmistakable as either Wood or the team. ROCKET TO THE MOON featured a cover done by Joe Orlando by himself. Inside the cover is an insert by Wood, and the rest of the comic is most recognizable as Orlando. This was a special that AVON did, indirectly adapting O. A. Kline's novel, "Maza of The Moon." "An Earth Man on Venus," by Ralph Milne Farley - AVON 1951 - is undoubtably a classic. The cover is not Wood, but the rest of the comic most assuredly is - 25 stunning pages of it!

STRANGE WORLDS #3 has an inside cover insert by Wood and "Kenton of The Star Patrol," - 8 pages of excellent work. The story at the end of this issue is a rare thing to look upon for it was done by a host of artists! "The Invasion From The Abyss" features work by Wallace Wood, Al Williamson, Frank Frazetta, Roy Krenkel, and the alien script language of Edgar Rice Burroughs!! To the experienced --as well as inexperienced fan of E. C. artists--this story has the tendency to boggle the mind!! STRANGE WORLDS #4 has Orlando on the cover, Wood insert, and a lead story with very well developed Orlando, finished with "The Lost Kingdom of Athala" - very good Wood. STRANGE WORLDS #5 is again most likely Orlando on the cover, with Wood inside cover insert, and Orlando on the story. AVON also ran a title called "Space Detective," which for the first two issues carried covers by first Wood, and then Orlando. Issue #1 carries mostly what looks like the inkwork of Orlando - although there are traces of Wally's linework. Issue #2 carried an inside cover insert by Wood, and the rest of the issue features some artist who would like to be a Wood or Orlando - but falls way short! FLYING SAUCERS, Avon, 1951, did not carry a Wood cover, but inside are 21 pages signed by Wood. Thus, the E. C. reader could, by keeping his eyes open - spot Wally and Joe at other places - before they became firmly entrenched with E. C. An early study of this work would reveal to the fan much of what was to come in the years ahead for WEIRD FANTASY and WEIRD SCIENCE.

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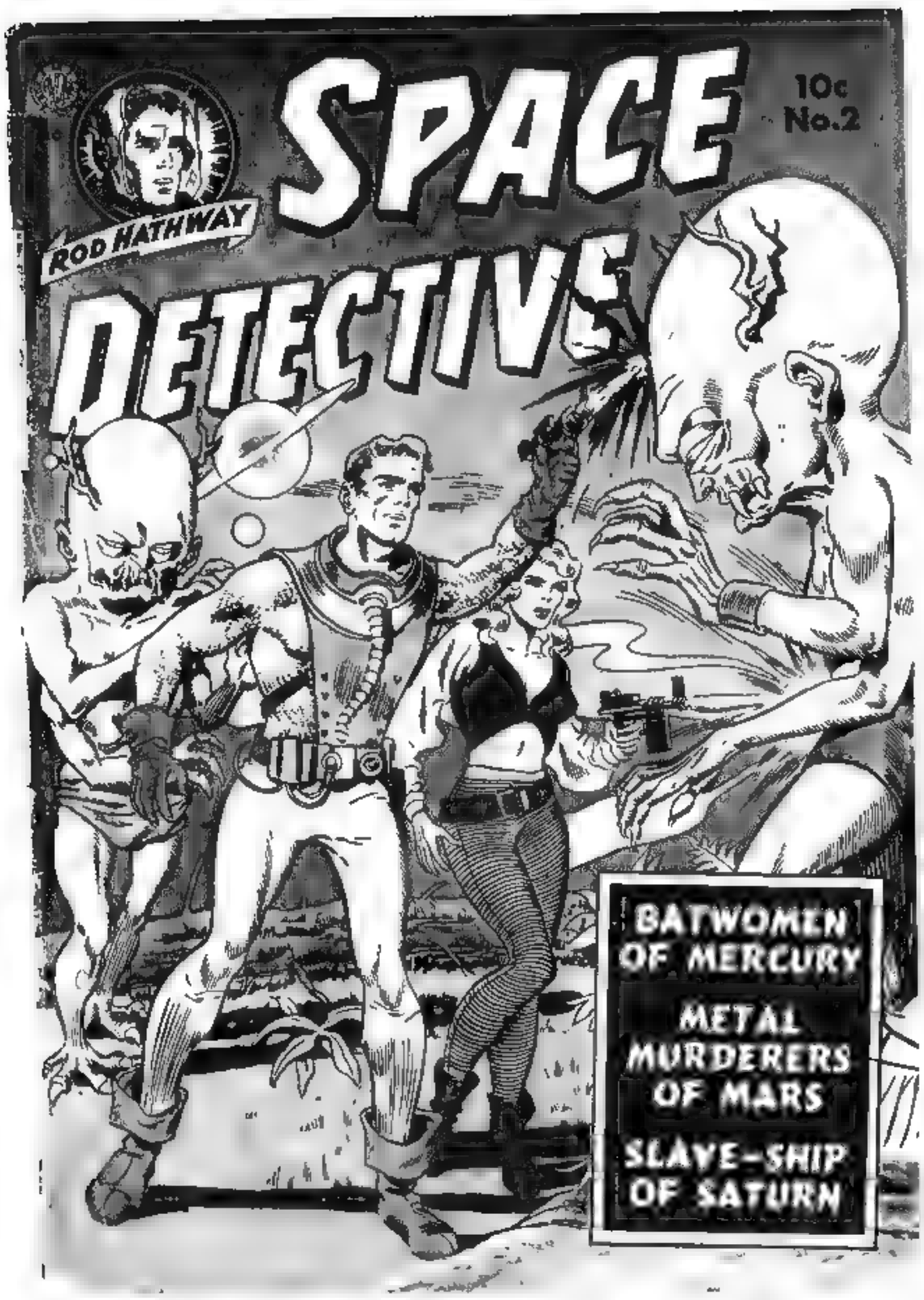
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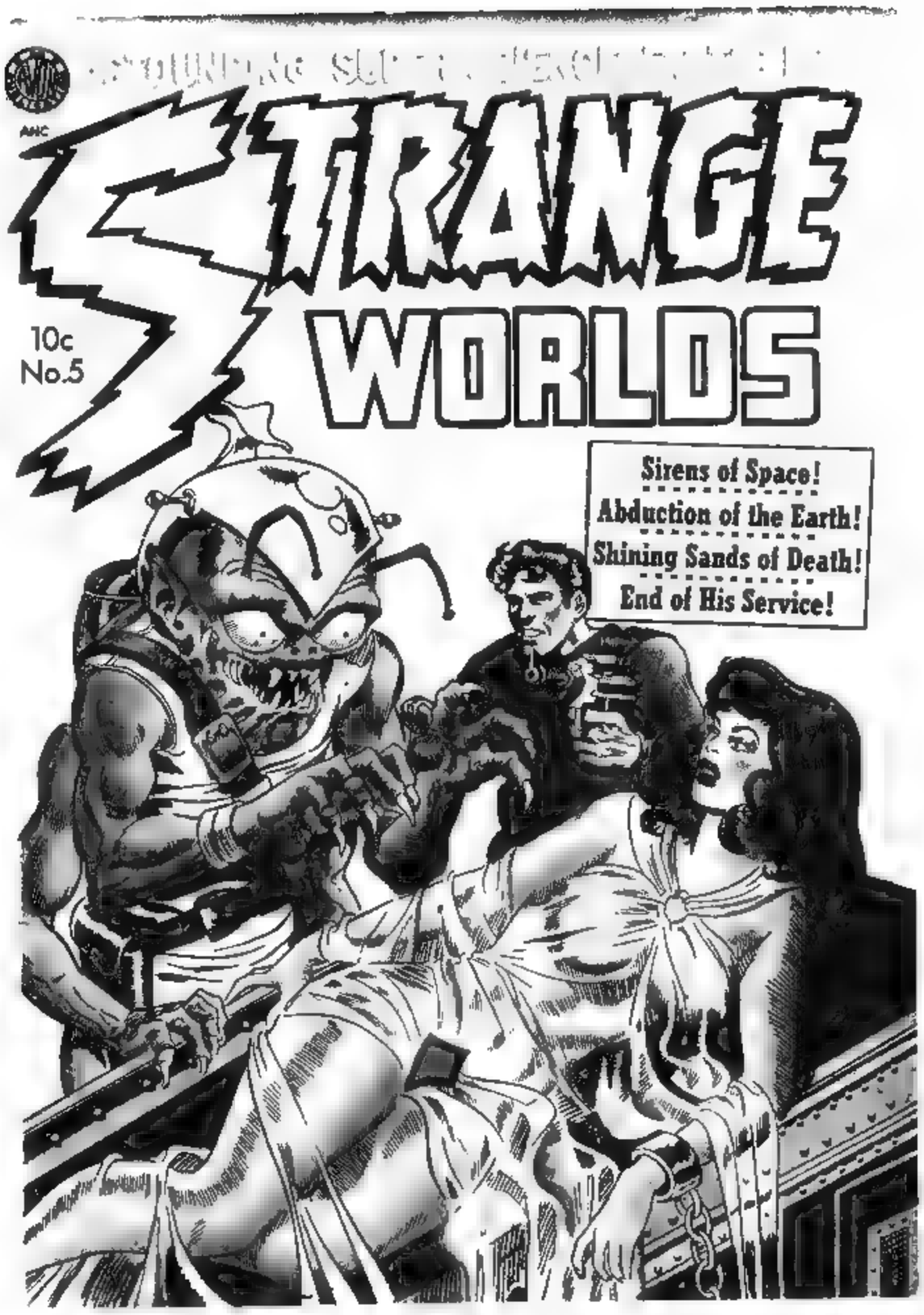
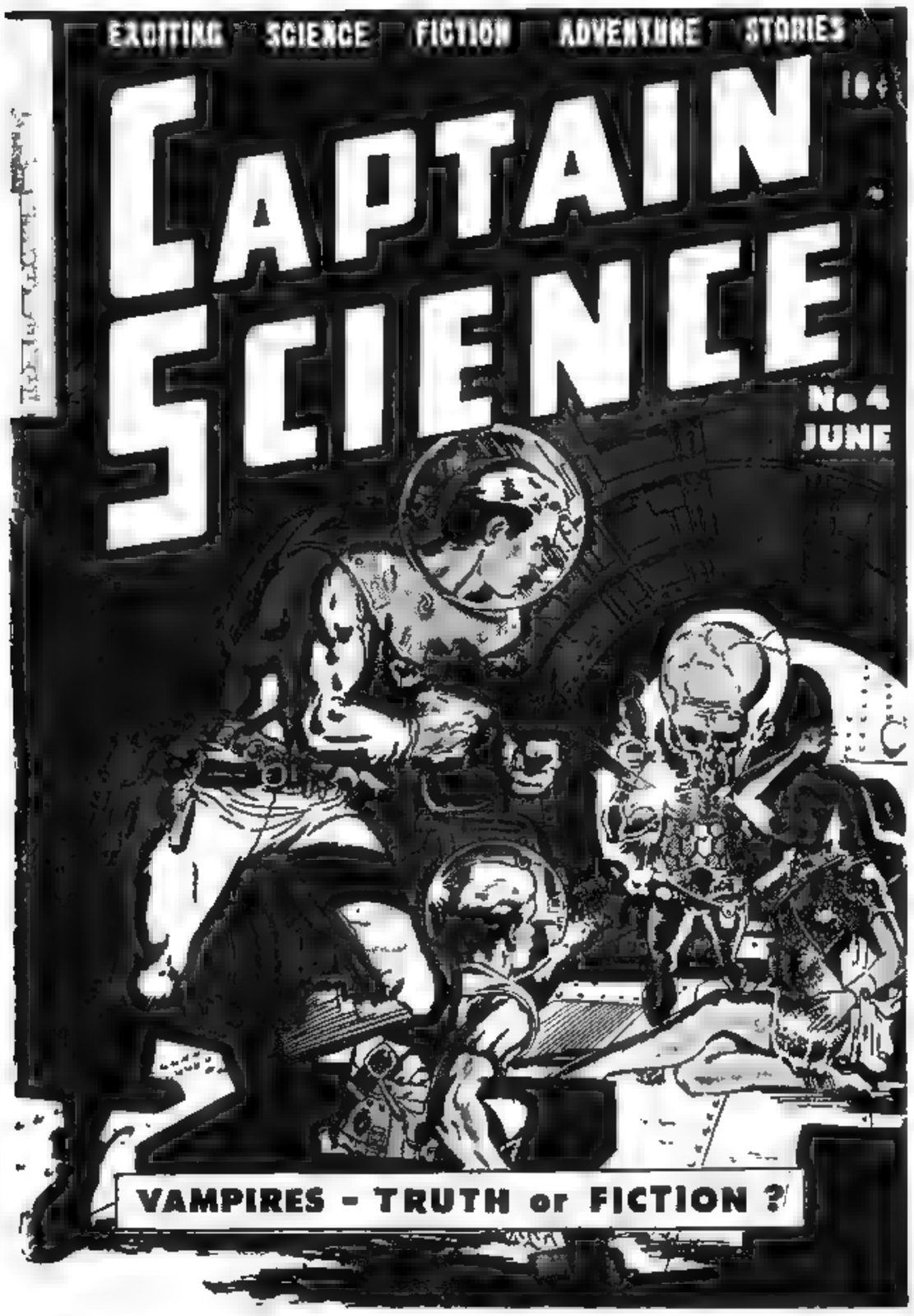
METAL MURDERERS OF MARS
SLAVE-SHIP OF SATURN


AMC
STRANGE WORLDS
10c
No.5
Sirens of Space!
Abduction of the Earth!
Shining Sands of Death!
End of His Service!


EXCITING SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE STORIES
CAPTAIN SCIENCE
10¢
No.4
JUNE
VAMPIRES - TRUTH or FICTION ?

EXCITING SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURE STORIES
CAPTAIN SCIENCE
AUG.
THE SHARK PIRATES OF PISCES

With the #8 issue of W.S. and W.F., the evidence of the other companies' attempts to duplicate the E.C. s-f titles was apparent. COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE carried the following words, "As most of you E.C. readers have probably noticed by now, some pretty sad imitations of E.C. comic magazines have begun to appear on the newsstands. Now, your humble editors do not object to competition! We recognize the fact that competition is both inevitable and desirable in the American system of free enterprise. BUT...WE DON'T WANT TO SEE ANY OF YOU FAITHFUL E.C. FANS MISLED INTO BELIEVING THAT THESE IMITATIONS ARE E.C. MAGAZINES! An E.C. magazine carries the E.C. emblem....your guarantee of the finest in quality and entertainment! Any similarity that any other magazines may start to show in titles, title words, characters, or subject matter....IS PURELY INTENTIONAL! The success of E.C. magazines is known, and other publishers would like to cash in on our hard work! DON'T BE FOOLED!" The obvious attempt by other publishers was, of course, evident; and at this time, it was also becoming evident that Bill Gaines was attempting to form a close knit circle of editors and artists - exclusively working for E.C.

The #9 issues (Sept-Oct) made this apparent. W.S. #9 (see SQUA TRONT #2, page 42) brandished a spectacular cover by Wallace Wood. The inside lead story was by Wally; second, "The Martian Monster" by Jack Kamen; third, Wood again with "The Invaders." COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE revealed, "First place (last issue of WEIRD SCIENCE) was won....and it's beginning to be a habit!....by Weird Wally Wood." The trend for W.S. was set -- Wood, a recognized leader now at E.C. -- would do every cover for W.S. from this point....many times having two stories on the inside. Feldstein would handle the covers occasionally with W.F. (for quite a while, continually) since other E.C. titles were beginning to take more and more of his time. E.C. was growing, and with the company's total growth, the small nucleus that began the E.C. New Trend would have to divide and acquire new talent. This was again apparent in W.S.'s #9 COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE in a message from Gaines to the readers -- "I regret to announce to you readers that the pressures of script writing and editing will practically eliminate my cohort, Mr. Feldstein, from the field of art work. Except for an occasional cover or story, Al's efforts and talents will be directed primarily at continuing to make the E.C. line the finest and most popular group of comics on the newsstands. The very best of luck in your full-time job of editor, Al!" So the guiding hand of Feldstein would be raised from W.X. and W.F. for the rest of their existence.

W.F. #9 saw Joe Orlando do his first real masterpiece for E.C., and a master's work it was -- "Mistake in Multiplication" gave the E.C. reader a pristine look at just how well a comic book format could narrate and illustrate the concepts in science fiction. W.S. #10, cover by Wood, stories: 2 by Wood, 1 by Kamen, and 1 by Orlando. Jack Kamen, by this time, had become well known for his rendition of the female form and was also seemingly best adapted for the melodramatic type of science fiction story. Orlando became more and more precise in his inkwork and it seemed to take on a looseness that would suggest he finally had full confidence in his work.

It was during this time that the "conference" was old hat and routine to most of the editorial staff. Bill Gaines and Al Feldstein at first, then stemming to Wally Wood later, would meet at certain times and talk over story plots and ideas. "Many times after hashing out a story to its final form, we would know that it was fitted for a certain artist," Bill Gaines has said. It must have been true for the excellence of the work the E.C. staff turned out had to stem from a factor of their enjoying what they were doing. And the editors enjoyed their work too, while at the same time taking it very seriously. W.F. #10 held a first--the second Wood story in the issue was titled "The Mutants!" and was an indirect play upon man's prejudice against his fellow man. This story contained a definite statement and it was forcefully put across.

With the #11 issues, the Science Fiction magazines began a feature that had been long requested--the featured "E.C. ARTIST OF THE ISSUE," starting with Jack Kamen in W.S. #11. A short note was given of Jack's history and mention made that from the first time Jack did work for E.C., he was a consistent member of the E.C. family. In W.F. #11, Al Feldstein - his history and involvement. These features were extremely interesting in that they gave much wanted information along with photographs of the artist, at his drawing board, or in the E.C. offices. At this point, W.F. and W.S. had taken great steps and they were in another stage of their development -- sort of a middle phase -- that

was to last for quite some time. During this period Wood, Orlando and Kamen dominated the scene as artists. The stories became more interesting and better written. From "Container of Rainy Days," Don and Maggie Thompson relate, "The E.C. s-f line was worth collecting for artwork alone, but the stories made them essential. In a quest for adult stories, they frequently 'borrowed' from adult stories; sometimes changing the ending, often not. Among the authors 'honored' in this fashion by E.C. were William Hope Hodgson, Gry de Maupassant, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Milne Farley, Henry Russell Wakefield, Roald Dahl, Richard Matheson, Damon Knight, John Collier, Katherine MacLean, Polton Cross (John Russell Fearn), Nelson Bond, Anthony Boucher, Fredric Brown, and Ray Bradbury."

Though many stories were adapted, it was always for the better. Many times the author's work was handled differently for the comic format, being used in ways that would better communicate the idea. The improvement of the story content was overwhelmingly proven (as so many times before with so many subjects) by the COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE in W.F. #11 which carried the announcement -- "We're happy to announce the WEIRD FANTASY #10 achieved a rare distinction....it hit the jackpot! Your voting was so heavy on all the stories and the percentages for each so close, that for the first time in many, many months, all four stories ended in a dead heat....a tie for first place!" The #11 issues (Jan-Feb 1952) were witnessing a change, and with it came their moving into the year 1952. They had been in existence for one and one-half years.

W.S. #12 held inside as the feature artist of the issue Wallace Wood, with a photo of Wally holding original work - and in the background....E.C.'s stood up in a rack. The lead story, "A Gobl Is A Knog's Best Friend" was nothing new - the type of story that contained a twist to it. Many had gone before, many would follow, most of them of trivial point. Men are eating a meal on a space-ship, they are eating salad, they crash on a foreign world - are picked up in a giant scoop, and deposited in a gigantic alien's salad! A group of Western cattlemen are captured by aliens, taken into a space-ship and flown far, far away. They are fed every day after they reach the other world, and become very fat - then a beautiful girl enters, saying, "The girls are waiting." They follow her through a small door and are led to slaughter, like cattle. Two circus men follow a freak to obtain him for their Freak Show; are transported to another world by the freak - and shown on the alien world inside cages as "freaks" themselves. "A Gobl Is A Knog's Best Friend"?? -- men are kept, by superior beings, as pets. All these stories were, in a sense, predictable when one got used to them; yet they always taught the reader to look at things from the other side of the fence. Of what use was this??? Certainly questionable, until the story "Judgment Day" - but I will go into that later.

W.F. #12 opened with a feature on Joe Orlando - followed with a story by Wood - "Project...Survival!" - about the A.R.C.-1, the only space-ship on Earth capable of reaching space; the world's destruction; the escape of the ship under the commanding officer, Doctor Jansen; and the eventual return of the ship after the complete end of all life on Earth. At the last of the story, the space-crew return, plant seeds on Earth, nurture animal embryos - and destory their scientific equipment which they think has been the cause of man's destruction. In the last panel the Doctor reprimands someone for using his scientific title, telling his comrade to call him by his first name - NOAH...A.R.C. .... Ark??? This type of story was also being seen more and more in the E.C. s-f titles, almost the equivalent to the SHOCK endings in the horror comics.

W.F. #13 brought two interesting things to the E.C. fans. One was a letter from a mother of three, condemning E.C., saying that the horror books were disgraceful and that the science ones were not much better...that it would take a low type of person to read these books. Gaines and company gave a reply, and then waited for the readers to react to the letter. Also in this issue, E.C. made a very important mistake. Once again quoting Don and Maggie Thompson -- "In WEIRD FANTASY #13 appeared a six page story illustrated by Wally Wood. Its title: 'Home to Stay!' In it, a boy and his mother await the return of the star-faring man of the family, often expressing the wish that he would come home to Earth and stay home instead of traveling in space. The spaceship explodes in mid-flight, the occupants, in spacesuits, drift to their doom. The husband-father drifts to Earth and burns up in the atmosphere as a meteor. Below, his wife and son watch the sky and see a falling star on which the boy wishes, 'I wish...I wish my daddy would come home tonight...home to stay!' A good yarn, but as was pointed out by several readers and by Ray Bradbury, it was a combination of two Bradbury stories from The Illustrated Man: 'Kaleidoscope' and 'The Rocket Man.'" A mistake, yes -- but as

it turned out, issues later E.C. would be carrying a new slogan: "IN THIS ISSUE - E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY RAY BRADBURY - AMERICA'S TOP SCIENCE-FICTION WRITER!"

Bradbury had written E.C. - and an agreement was to be made that in the future if E.C. wanted to use a Bradbury story, they could adapt it as they like and simply give him credit. By W.S. #13, Wally Wood was entering his peak stage at E.C. The cover work and interior illustrations from this point onward would be more than any comic fan could ever hope to find within the pages of a comic-book.

W.S. #14 introduced the craft of Will Elder to E.C. s-f readers for the first time. "Inside Story" was not particularly exciting, yet it tended to remind one of the old Feldstein stories in a more polished state. Sid Check also stepped into E.C.'s light for a short time with the third story, "Strategy!" COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE introduced - "...a newcomer to the E.C. family. As in the case of all newcomers, his fate is in your hands! His name is Sid Check, and if you'll just shift your eyes about 6 inches to the right, you'll see the result of his first efforts for E.C. Sid comes from the 'Wood-Orlando school,' having worked with them for some time before striking out on his own!"

W.F. also introduced a new artist, one who was destined to become very popular with the readers -- Al Williamson. "Mad Journey!" was not Williamson's type of story and being his first job, it ended up a little tight. W.F. #14 presented the kind of complete enjoyment that every E.C. reader could expect from this point onward. The issue opened with "The Exile!" by Wally Wood -- a story of a prison planet where the United Galactic Empire sends its criminals, first totally wiping out their memories, then years later (after the planet has developed on its own) supplying them with fake memories. As the story ends, the two U.G.E. crewmen, with their latest misfit, round the satellite of the prison planet -- it is Earth. The young crewman speaks, "It...it looks so foreboding, Z-7!" His comrade replies, "That is because you sense the festering evil that is upon it! The millions of years of intermarrying...the continuous arrival of new exiles...all keep mounting evil upon evil!" Once again the younger one asks, "What is it like down there NOW, Z-7?" His comrade: "Now they are in the middle of a 'World War!' Our prisoner is going to find himself a soldier in one of the opposing armies! You were interested in names, X-51! The very first criminal sent here, so many eons ago, took the name of Adam! The second...the woman...took the name of Eve!" The younger: "And our prisoner, Z-7?" The older: "He will be landed in an area known as Germany! I'm sure our prisoner's added evil upon Earth will have its EFFECT! It is now the year numbered 1914 down there! Give him, say 19 years! Then see!" "And his name, Z-7? What will it be?" "Adolph SCHICKLGRUBER or ADOLPH HITLER...as he sees fit!" "He...he looks evil, Z-7! I...I wonder how much effect he will HAVE?"

This jolter was then followed by another new innovation from E.C. "The E.C. QUICKIE" as it was called, usually ran four pages and brought a swift execution to the story. These first two "E.C. "Quickies" were illustrated by Joe Orlando. The first was about a scientist who tried to convince the editors that his phony information about the planet Mars was true, even a wild part describing the state of a Martian in anger - with antennas protruding from the head. The Editor and Publisher attempt to kick out their infatuated professor -- but he gets mad and, ANTENNAS PROTRUDING, tells them he's a Martian! The second was just as ridiculous, and the narration with all its cutting up by Bill and Al was followed by Joe's satiric caricature of the two.

Now the E.C. Science Fiction titles were moving into their golden age. W.F. #15 held (opinion, of course) the best cover Al Feldstein did; and to boot, three Williamson stories! Al, in a very short time managed to mature into the artist who completely overwhelmed E.C. readers with "By George!!" "Revulsion!" was by Joe Orlando, and one of his best. By this issue, the answers to Mrs. Phelan's letter were pouring in....."I have a daughter 5 years old and she looks forward to every issue of E.C. magazines as much as my husband and I, and I can assure you she's perfectly normal!"..... "Don't forget, it's an empty wagon that rattles most!"..... "Crime starts at home and on street corners, not in comics, Mrs. Phelan."....on and on they went. The fans were more than mildly

irritated by her letter, and one could see that this argument was not just something that had sprung up of late. Regrettably, this would not be the last E.C. would hear from people who "knew better" than anyone else. W.S. #15 featured cover and lead story by Wood. Wally only did one story in W.S. #15 since at the same time he was working for Kurtzman's new creation - MAD.

With the next issues came the announcement of the first E.C. s-f ANNUAL titled, ironically, what was to be the future remnant of both the E.C. s-f magazines -- WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY ANNUAL #1. It was issued around December of 1952. The annuals were simply four old E.C.'s, with covers removed. The guts of the four issues were stapled together with a newly issued ANNUAL cover and sold for 25¢ each. Today, 15 years later, they bring $25.00 each!

W.F. #16 (cover published, SQUA TRONT #2, page 43) hosted a fantastic work by Al Feldstein, a re-work in short of the same subject matter as W.F. #2 where aliens from their spaceship are watching the destruction of Earth. W.S. #16 set a mood about it from the Wood cover that enhanced it that has never been accomplished since. Wood, Williamson, Kamen, and Orlando put across four finely refined s-f stories. The #17 issues finally carried the banner, and Bradbury would be with them in almost every issue - till their death. The year was 1953.

W.F. #17....Joe Orlando, "In The Beginning..."; Elder, "Ahead of The Game!"; Al Williamson, "The Aliens"; Wally Wood, Bradbury's "There Will Come Soft Rains" - a masterpiece of graphic art and story. With a minimum of balloons and sufficient narration to successfully communicate the tale, E.C. proceeded to amaze its readers. When this story was finished, the reader's first reaction was a mild state of shock...one was left speechless. From this point, the E.C. s-f titles would be complete. Their artists had matured...their editors were in their prime...and their publisher was at the stage of refusing (even in the face of reality -- the s-f titles were losing thousands of dollars) to let them die. They would continue, as the ad in W.F. #17 stated..."We at E.C. are Proudest of our Science-Fiction Magazines!" W.S. #17 -- "Plucked!" -- a story by Wood that restated visually what did not need emphasizing...Wallace Wood was doing for E.C. what Will Eisner did for THE SPIRIT. "The Island Monster" brandished the swift and loose, and now confident, work of Al Williamson. The COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE let their readers see what Ray Bradbury's reaction to E.C.'s adaptations were...."Dear Bill: By all means, please show this letter to Jack Davis and Joe Orlando. I want to thank them for the painstaking work they did on 'The Coffin' and 'The Long Years.' I got a great deal of pleasure looking at the silver prints of the adaptations. Thanks so much for sending them on! And please thank Al for the fine layout work, and the adaptations themselves! This is a real adventure for me!....I've nothing but the kindest regard and love for you, Al, Mr. Orlando, and Mr. Davis for work beautifully and handsomely and cleverly thought out and completed! Long may we all work together! My blessings to you all! Yours, Ray."

"OUR HEADS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY REELING, MR. B!" was the reply printed below. "The Long Years!" appeared in the back of W.S. #17, and as Bradbury had observed, it was very well done.

W.F. #18 was an off-beat item in that its cover held both the work of Al Feldstein and Roy G. Krenkel. "Counter-Clockwise" by Severin and Elder headed the issue; a Bradbury adaptation followed, illustrated by the artist most fitted for "Zero Hour" -- Jack Kamen. COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE was starting to print letters from fans who would still have an interest 15 years later. "Your magazines are by far the best in their field, and I had thought there was no room at all for improvement. However, I was delighted to learn that your standards will be raised even higher by the acquisition of Ray Bradbury, the finest fantasy and science-fiction author alive. Congratulations!" - signed, Jack Promo. "Homesick!" followed, illustrated by Al Williamson. Then Joe Orlando, by luck of assignment, had the rare priviledge to graphically illustrate a masterpiece of comic art and story -- "Judgment Day." The story opens with the arrival of Tarlton to the planet Cybrinia...the sphere of mechanical life. He has come from "Earth Colonization" to inspect and ascertain if the civilization is ready to join the Galactic Republic. Tarlton is met by an orange colored robot who escorts him through the throng of welcoming robots to the city itself -- and straight to the plant where the robots are created. This is a good place to begin, for Tarlton is shown how each individual robot is brought into existence - through the parts department, unit construction, skeleton placement, placement of internal units, to the sheathing stage where the orange shells are attached. Tarlton has interrupted midway through the tour of the plant to ask why there are only orange robots being built. "Oh! We ....we MAKE only ORANGE robots here. The BLUE robots, well....I'll take you to THEIR plant LATER...." After the robot is sheathed, Tarlton and his escort step to the "Educator" where the mechanical brain is charged with all knowledge available to the society - then becoming a member of the society. As they move out of the plant, the orange robot says, "THEN he is FREE to follow his CHOICE OF ENDEAVOR..." Tarlton asks to see the blue robot assembly plant, and they move in the direction toward it - Blue Town as the orange robot calls it. Coming to a bus stop, Tarlton notices that there is a denoted "orange" and "blue" section of the bench. Tarlton: "You...differentiate between BLUE robots and ORANGE robots?" "Of course! OTHERWISE there'd be TROUBLE! Have to keep them in their PLACE, you know..." Tarlton nods and, stepping onto the bus, finds that the orange robots sit up front while the blue robots sit in back. Finally they reach Blue Town....where the buildings no longer shine....and as they enter the blue assembly plant, the blue robot in charge apologizes for the appearance - their funds are limited. It would be best to quote from this point:

> THE BLUE ROBOT GUIDED TARLTON INTO THE PARTS DEPARTMENT....
> Blue Robot: This is where our units are constructed." Tarlton: "Notice, my friend. They use the same alloy in their parts as you do." Orange: "I...I...see..." ....THEN ON TO THE ASSEMBLY LINE.... Tarlton: "Notice the internal units, my friend, The SAME designs, the ORIGINAL designs. No improvement! No difference! Exactly like yours!" Orange: "We...we know that Tarlton..." ....AND FINALLY TO THE SHEATHING STAGE.... Tarlton: "It is only HERE, my friend, with the blue sheathings, that a Difference can be Detected. But the sheathings are only Outside Coverings. The inside structures are no Different than yours..." Blue Robot: "The sheathings Make that difference to the Orange Robots, Tarlton! It limits us to Menial Jobs...sends us to the Rear of Mobile-buses...places us in Different Recharging Stations...forces us to live in a Special Section of the city..." Tarlton: "And when a Blue Robot is completed. Then what....?" Blue Robot: "He is Tested, then placed in the educator, Tarlton. Only THIS educator is a Blue educator! It hasn't the ADVANTAGES of the orange educator..." Tarlton: "Tell me, my friend...(turning, pointing to the blue robot)...would you deny that the DIFFERENCES between You and the Blue Robots are Taught...in your educator?" Orange Robot: "I...I couldn't deny that, Tarlton." Tarlton: "The educator is the parents and the relatives and the environment and the school all rolled into one, eh?" Orange Robot: "I...I don't understand those words, Tarlton." Tarlton: "No! I guess You Wouldn't! You said before that this was a Free Enterprise Society. That after an orange robot serves its time on the assembly line, that it is Free to Follow Its own Choice of endeavor..." Orange: "I...I said that, yet." Tarlton: "That of course, does not include the blue robots, eh? Their choices of endeavor are LIMITED...." Orange: "You are Lecturing Me as though all this were my fault, Tarlton! This existed long before I was Made! What can I do about it! I'm only One Robot!" Tarlton: "I am SORRY my friend! Yes. I know you are only one robot. That is why I am afraid that Cybrinia is not yet ready to join the Great Galactic Republic..." Orange: "No. Wait,

Tarlton...." TARLTON MOVED OUT OF THE BLUE ASSEMBLY PLANT THROUGH BLUE TOWN. THE ORANGE ROBOT HURRIED AFTER HIM.... Orange: "Why, Tarlton? Why aren't we Ready?" Tarlton: "Ask YOURSELF that, my friend! Tell your Fellow Robots to ask THEMSELVES that question!" TARLTON MOVED FAST. THE ROBOT CLANKED AFTER HIM..... Orange: "Is...is there any HOPE, Tarlton? FOR US?" Tarlton: "Of course there is!" TARLTON STOPPED BELOW HIS GLEAMING ROCKET.... Tarlton: "Of course there's HOPE for YOU, my friend. For a while, on Earth, it looked like there was NO HOPE! But when mankind on Earth learned to Live Together, REAL progress first Began. The Universe was Suddenly Ours." Orange Robot: "...and when WE learn to live together...." Tarlton: "The Universe will be YOURS TOO. Good-bye, my friend!" "Good-by Tarlton." THE SHIP ROARED UP INTO THE NIGHT SKY. IT ROARED INTO THE INFINITE VOID OF SPACE....INTO THE ENDLESS COSMIC VACUUM! IT ROARED TOWARD GLORIOUS EARTH.....AND INSIDE THE SHIP, THE MAN REMOVED HIS SPACE HELMET AND SHOOK HIS HEAD, AND THE INSTRUMENT LIGHTS MADE THE BEADS OF PERSPIRATION ON HIS DARK SKIN TWINKLE LIKE DISTANT STARS.

E.C. had delivered a wallop!!!! Mail poured in by the tons; this was recognized for what it was. Larry Stark resounded the voice of most everyone who read it when he wrote, "The horribly accurate picture of the human race is drawn with bold, unmistakable strokes. It is a yarn that first convinces you of its believability, and then begins to tell you the truth about yourself in just as believable terms."

W.S. #18 contained Bradbury's "Mars Is Heaven!" - a perfected adaptation along with artwork by Wood of the same caliber. "Snap Ending" by Al Williamson was undoubtedly one of the finest illustrative stories that Al ever did. COSMIC CORRESPONDENCE in this issue carried a message that was a clue to the reality of the monetary situation of the E.C. s-f titles -- the comic-book business was going through a depression because of overstocking the newsstands with too many titles, and E.C. was feeling this. What the readers did not know was that WEIRD FANTASY and WEIRD SCIENCE were feeling the depression exceedingly. The editors thanked the fans for their religious continued buying of solely comics with the E.C. label and urged them to continue.

W.F. #19 held a first, cover-wise. Joe Orlando (see SQUA TRONT #2, page 44) did an intriguing cover design. The featured artist inside was Al Williamson and the lead story - "King of The Grey Spaces!" by Ray Bradbury. "Brain-Child" - illustrated by Williamson - was another example that Al Feldstein was doing much better work with just the job of writing. Before, there had been a split between the editorial chores and illustrating - but now all of Al's time could be spent with research, planning - and the writing itself. And it showed. The stories became more and more sophisticated and intense in their conceptions. It got to the point that if you skipped one panel, you had lost so much of the story-line that you were forced into backstepping and reading the lost information. W.S. #19 carried a feature on the man, BRADBURY - much in the same fashion as the "featured artist of the issue." "The Precious Years" once again exemplified how truly advanced Feldstein was becoming in his stories - the story was a modern-day FAUST. Wood did tremendous work for this story. "The One Who Waits" written by Bradbury and illustrated by Williamson was another classic. "Right On The Button!" - illustrated by Elder - may not have made an overwhelming impression on the E.C. fans, but it was used as evidence against E.C. by the Senate Hearings, because of the ending where the newly-wed wife stabs her husband after discovering he is an alien. "Keyed Up!" was illustrated by a man who was pushing himself to further limits - Joe Orlando.

W.S. #20 held another Bradbury story, and in the letter column the editors explained to the readers that Bradbury's stories had to be digested slowly and thoroughly - or they could never be understood. It was revealed that 34% loved Ray, 47% could take his stories or leave them, 19% could not stand him. W.S. #20 also held the well-remembered "50 Girls 50". W.F. #20 spoke to the readers in new and better terms. "I, Rocket" by Ray Bradbury was illustrated by Al Williamson and Frank Frazetta. "For Us... The Living" took the over-worked time machine story and gave it a fresh plot.

W.S. #21 gave the fans a rare look at the whole E.C. staff in the lead story "E.C. Confidential!" "Punishment Without Crime" put forth a Bradbury story that would puzzle and bother many readers, the minority realizing what a stride E.C. was making at this point. The third story, drawn by Williamson and Frazetta, was simply spectacular. The Williamson-Frazetta team did the cover for W.F. #21. Inside was a letter from Bradbury...."Severin and Elder, in "King of the Gray Spaces," have a very fresh technique, new and well handled. I certainly hope you'll have them work on some of my other stories. I should think they would do well on something like "The Million Year Picnic." The editor's reply? ... "No sooner said than done, Mr. B.! See the end spot of this issue! - ed." Thus, "The Million Year Picnic," in all its subtle form, was presented by the pencil-inking team of Severin and Elder. It was perfect.

November-December - the last of the year 1953, and the last of W.S. and W.F. Inside the covers of both titles was not a featured artist, but.....

IN MEMORIAM

THIS MAGAZINE DIES WITH THIS ISSUE! Much as we at E.C. love WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY, practical considerations must finally outweigh sentiment. The simple eco - nomic facts speak for themselves. There are not enough discerning science-fiction readers in the country to support a "high print" s-f mag, such as a 10¢ "comic" must of necessity be. Both of our s-f mags, for the past year and one-half, have consistently finaled in below the breaking point. This means that every one of the last 18 issues has lost money. The TOTAL losses for both mags....not including the two current issues....runs about $15,000. Of course, this is not to say that we did not make money on the two mags for a long while. But at this point, our losses have more than eaten away the early profits.

However, there is one alternative to E.C.'s complete abandonment of science-fiction. And that is....a 15¢ magazine! By charging 15¢, we would be able to cut the print order to a more practical point, and yet leave ourselves with a low enough breaking point to possibly make such a magazine pay...or at least come out even! This move, of course, will need your wholehearted support. We will be banking on the continued loyal readership of the majority of our current s-f fans.

So here is our plan:

1) Replace WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY with a new magazine combining the old titles. It will be called (like E.C.'s s-f annual) WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY.

2) The price of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY will be 15¢ (And we pray that all of you are sufficiently addicted to our unique variety of illustrated s-f, and enjoy our stories well enough, to consider the extra nickel tariff well spent.)

3) WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY will start as a quarterly magazine. (If and when you, our readers, prove its success, we will gladly increase its status to that of a bimonthly....or even - oh joy! - a monthly!

4) A subscription to WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY will cost one dollar for seven issues.... manila envelopes....and so forth!

5) All issues due from existing subscriptions to WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY will be totaled and automatically converted into WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY subscriptions at no

extra charge. (However, no new subscriptions to WEIRD SCIENCE and/or WEIRD FANTASY will be accepted after December 31, 1953.)

In closing, may we say that, while we at E. C. regret the passing of WEIRD SCIENCE and WEIRD FANTASY, we happily and hopefully welcome the birth of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY. We trust that you will too. - The Editors.

These final issues contained two new additions to the E. C. s-f artist staff - Reed Crandall and Berni Krigstein - both appearing in W. F. #22. "The Silent Towns" by Bradbury was handled exceptionally well by Reed. There was a poetic flair in the expression and visualization of Genevieve Selsor and Walter Griff - perfectly rounded out with the brilliant adaptation that Feldstein gave the story. Berni Krigstein was to give something to the E. C. s-f titles that they had not seen before, just as Ray Bradbury had added that spark every now and then.....Mr. Krigstein was to visually revitalize the same kind of creative spark. The innovation and creation that the Science Fiction titles knew in their early days.....with Kurtzman.....was to come again.

The second WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY ANNUAL appeared about this time. Following is a listing of the known variations of the E. C. S-F ANNUALS:

() 1952:	WF#10,	WF#13,	WS# 6,	WS#10
1952:	WF#12,	WF#11,	WS# 6,	WS# 9
1952:	WF#12,	WF#11,	WS# 8,	WS# 7
1952:	WS#13,	WF#13,	WS#11,	WS# 5

() 1953:	WF#14,	WF#19,	WS# 16,	WF#16
() 1953:	WS#14,	WS#15,	WF#17,	WF#14
() 1953:	WS#17,	WS#15,	WF#15,	WF#14
() 1953:	WS#18,	WS#19,	WF#15,	WF#19
() 1953:	WS#18,	WS#19,	WF#17,	WF#18

In March of 1954, W.S.-F #23 hit the stands. The cover was by Wally and interior first story - "The Children" - by the same. "Fish Story" followed by Williamson, and then the letter column where the editors stated that the comic the buyer held in his hand was the biggest gamble that E. C. had ever taken - and that the fate of W.S-F. was in the readers' hands. Bradbury's "The Flying Machine" had third placement in W.S-F. #23. Here was a free-flowing line that no one had ever attempted before--spontaneous in execution, innate in origin, free in expression, subtle and diverse in its technique and finesse ---- this was the inkwork of Berni Krigstein. This story was so completely different that an E. C. reader was apt to have a "takeback" - and wonder if he was really reading a comic book. The story? I don't have ten pages to explain it. W.S-F. #24 hosted a cover by Al Feldstein that is the grandfather of the cover of SQUA TRONT #3; very much the same thing in inkwork and color overlay - rather than oil. Inside - an adapted work by Eando Binder, "The Teacher From Mars." W.S-F. #25 (see SQUA TRONT #2 for cover, page 45) carried a cover and interior story illustrated by Al Williamson for Ray Bradbury's "Sound of Thunder." The letter column carried Ray's opinion of Berni Krigstein's work....."'The Flying Machine' is the finest single piece of art-drawing I've seen in the comics in years. Beautiful work; I was so touched and pleased...Ray Bradbury."

W.S-F. #26 was a Special Issue. The band across the cover stated "E. C. CHALLENGES THE U.S. AIR FORCE With This Illustrated, Factual FLYING SAUCER REPORT." The issue was divided into documented reports with appropriate art by Wood, Crandall, Orlando, Evans, and Feldstein on the cover. E. C. timed its progression of the reported sightings along with some other startling facts and tried to insinuate that MARS was possibly connected in some way with the flying saucer sightings. The challenge to the Air Force was very blunt - and many questions were asked that, of course, could never be answered.

The year was 1955, and E. C. had been publishing s-f comics for five years. W.S-F. #27 was to be Wally Wood's second to last cover. "I, Robot" inside was the first "Adam Link" adaptation from Eando Binder's series of the mechanical creation. The art work by Wood in this issue could be more familiar to the MAD fan because, at this stage, Wally was again slightly changing his style to where it more closely resembles his work today. W.S-F. #28 changed its title logo design slightly - but by

this time the rocket blasting off to the left was also commonplace. With this issue, E.C. was forced to return to the 10¢ price to compete with industry. All of the issues of W.S-F. were different in one aspect. The covers had artwork that was unretouched - there were no balloons or banners placed over the art, as was the case with most W.S.'s and W.F.'s. The inside stories were beginning to reflect the weight of what Feldstein had been living under for the past 4 years. The stories were still on a high line of quality - yet they lacked the fresh approach so abundantly found in the early issues. "The Trial of Adam Link" continued E.C.'s adaptations of Mr. Binder's work.

W.S-F. #29 carried a FAMOUS FUNNIES Buck Rogers cover that Frank Frazetta did months earlier and had rejected because it supposedly contained too much violence. The helmet was taken off and the scene used for the cover. The stories inside this issue all had very strong emotional endings. "Vicious Circle" and "Genesis" were two in particular that carried very effective endings, ironically at the end of W.S-F.

August, 1955, and the Comics Code was in effect. E.D.'s last bid for life carried with it their never ending attempt to make a success of the s-f titles. INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION #30 appeared with a Jack Davis cover. The flavor of the E.C. s-f title was gone - Jack Davis, though well fitted for the Horror and War titles -- just did not bring to a cover what Wally Wood, Al Williamson, Joe Orlando, or Frank Frazetta could. Possibly the readers had been so set in their tastes that Davis could not be appreciated, but something did seem to be missing. "Clean Start" presented a Wood gradually becoming less interested in intricate anatomy and background work. "Marbles" illustrated by Berni Krigstein was only five pages - yet very well done. The story progression was exceptional because of Berni's experiments with the panel breakdown. Joe Orlando was also dwindling in his work. "Barrier" was an emotion-packed story and well fitted to Davis' action-packed panels. INCREDIBLE #31 held a Davis cover (see SQUA TRONT #2, page 47). Inside were stories that still carried some of the flame....each one building upon the other....till the end of the magazine where the reader still after five years felt that he had received his money's worth. Today when one spends $4 and $5 for an INCREDIBLE, he continues (in comparison to other comics) to feel his money was well spent.

INCREDIBLE S-F #32 held an interior story titled "Food For Thought" that was illustrated by Al Williamson and Roy Krenkel - the artwork was absolutely stunning! And the story equally intriguing. The rest of the issue contained work by people who now finally seemed to be partly disconnected from what they were doing. INCREDIBLE #33...the last issue...was not announced as such. But there were ominous clues: 7 pages of ads, no letter column, and the reprinting of the classic "Judgment Day!"

E.C. at this time was dying, and with it would go the last vestige of the s-f titles - INCREDIBLE. Rather than make a summary or last statement, I will leave you with messages from three people who knew the E.C. Science Fiction Comics better than I - Ray Bradbury, Bill Gaines and Larry Stark.

RAY BRADBURY.....

My reactions to the appearance of my stories adapted for EC Comics? Mixed.

The initial reaction, of course, one of great happiness. I had always wanted to have my own Sunday full-page panel. I still want it. But in the meantime, here was the chance to see my work done by some good illustrators and some fine illustrators.

The mixture of emotions, of course, came from the fact that I was beginning to get established in various other fields at the same moment. In 1953, when my name was appearing on more and more and yet more covers of EC magazines, my first films were beginning to appear, and I was given the task of adapting into screenplay form the incredible MOBY DICK, directed by John Huston. I knew of the rampant snobbism in the world concerning comic strips of any sort. This was long before most of the intellectuals, if you can call them that, had latched onto admitting they read comics morning, noon, or night. Whereas my love was constant, beginning when I was 3 years old and sat on my Dad's knee as he read Happy Hooligan and the Katzenjammer Kids to me. The love, which I suspect as being late and fraudulent, of the intellectuals, is a very recent thing. Only on occa-

INCREDIBLE

HERE IS E.C.'S FIRST ANNUAL

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

128 PAGES OF SCIENCE-FICTON

16 OF EC'S BEST YARNS FROM 1951

HERE IS E.C.'S SECOND ANNUAL

WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

1953

25¢

128 PAGES OF SCIENCE-FICTION

16 OF EC'S BEST YARNS FROM 1952

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sion, over the years, have they expressed an interest in such strips as Li'l Abner, 30 years ago, Barnaby in the '40's, and then in the 50's a strip like POGO. Most of the real attention has been paid in the past 5 or 6 years, and I say to hell with them. They wouldn't listen to us when we jumped up and down and knew what we loved in the years when it counted, so I won't let them into my club now. Their reasons for liking illustration and or comics are usually 'made-up' anyway. They are always listening to each other from the outside in, which is a helluva way to love, which isn't love at all, but a gimcrack exercise, a substitute. They read critics to find out what is safe, what is 'in'. I never bothered to find out. I simply fell in love with BUCK ROGERS when I was 9 and collected him every day and every Sunday, and fell in love with TARZAN when I was 11 and collected him every day and every Sunday, and fell in love with PRINCE VALIANT when I was 17 or 18 and now have 32 years of VALIANT put away in my collection.

Anyway, to go on, I think that my favorite EC comics are the science-fictional ones. Not that I didn't enjoy the horror adaptations, I did; but it seems to me that the work Al Williamson did on I, ROCKET and THE ONE WHO WAITS is exceptional, as is the fine work of WOOD on THERE WILL COME SOFT RAINS and MARS IS HEAVEN. I also enjoyed the very clean fine work of Severin and Elder on KING OF THE GREY SPACES.

All the while I was happy with the above, I still lived in some faint fear of someone in the film complex where I was working speaking up and saying something like "Bradbury? Say, isn't he the guy who writes for those cheap comic books?"

I think we have all been through this time and again, and have lived it out and finally found acceptance on many levels. Excellence is everywhere. On TV we find some of the finest work, ironically, occurring in the one-minute commercials...both live action and in cartoon or stop-motion animation. Similarly, in magazine commercial art, the best work is being done by advertising artists, not by gallery painters, in our country today. And nothing anyone can say will change this truth. The galleries are almost empty of Ideas, and, need I add, customers. I didn't make the situation. I merely comment on it. At the very time we are most critical of our materiality, art is being created in the midst of the dungheap. I find it vastly amusing. I find it reminiscent of Florence, Rome, and Venice, don't you, some few hundred years ago? When that hired 'hack' Fra Angelico did 'comic-strips' (have you ever seen them? look them up! in full color, oil) for the Church. Or the later hacks like Masaccio, Da Vinci or Michelangelo, all of them working for wages, eh?

...continued...pg. 50

The TRAITA

COLLECTOR

"THE TRIP" by Bob Barrett

A fly buzzed momentarily in the window of Dale's Drugstore (no longer in existence) and a young boy looked up briefly from his concentration. He had been busily perusing a shelf of comic books. After glancing up at the trapped fly, he once again settled himself on the tiled floor and began to thumb through the long row of comics. Suddenly, a title caught his eye and, with a mental yelp of delight, he snatched it up. The comic was DURANGO KID and he quickly turned the pages as if he was looking for something in particular. He stopped about half way through the book and breathed a sigh of relief --it was there! DAN BRAND AND TIPI by F. Frazetta. The boy did not know who F. Frazetta was but ever since he had bought issue number one of DURANGO KID with the very first story of DAN BRAND by Frazetta, he had saved each and every issue. And thus I began collecting the works of Frank Frazetta!

****

The giant Boeing 707 taxied to the end of the runway, revved the massive jets, released the brakes and shot forward. Nose up, the plane streaked into the heavens. The first step was taken in the culmination of a goal. I have been an admirer of the illustrative magic of Frank Frazetta since childhood. Now I was on my way to New York, the great melting pot of sundry cultures, for what I hoped would be a long and pleasant visit with him.

Drowsily I gazed out of the plane's window watching myriad cloud formations roll by, many with the appearance of ghostly, prehistoric hills and valleys. It pleasured me to imagine these wild, unreal landscapes peopled with the many characters created by the hand of Frank Frazetta. Once again, to my mind's eye, Thun'da raced through the jungles of the Lost Land to rescue Pha from the calloused clutches of the beastly cave people. Once more he clutched the mighty stone hammer, poised, ready to smite the ancient drum of Kalla the Cruel.

Suddenly we were passing over the ruins of what appeared to be New York City. There was the Empire State Building, broken, leaning like some grotesque Tower of Pisa. At the outskirts of the ruins stood two figures. One a tall, muscular man. The other a beautiful girl. Both were clad in the skins of animals. Tiga and his mate, Mari, were once again breaking the ancient tabu of their tribe. Once again they were running from the swamp men--scaley, ugly caricatures of man. Again they fought the mutations of the future and discovered the ancients of the past.

There, just beyond the wing....was that the figure of an ancient, armored knight astride a magnificent winged steed? Like fog retreating from the melting rays of the sun the images broke, faded and....in their places were the spires of Gotham. We had arrived! A rush of air, a sudden head jolting wrench as the brakes were applied and the silver, mechanical bird was borne to the concrete ribbon. Slowly it taxied to the parapet where we would disembark.

Struggling through the mass of writhing humanity, I managed to retrieve my baggage which had just been disgorged from the cavernous belly of the 707. Hands stretched out from everywhere! "Help you with your luggage, sir?" The cries of the Red Caps resounded from the walls of the air terminal. These I managed to elude as I tried and finally succeeded in locating a bus into the city.

Like a wizened gnome, the bus driver hunched in his seat waiting for the bus to fill. Then with a hiss of the closing door, a startling transformation began to take place in the gnomish driver. He seemed to gain in stature, become younger, as he engaged the gears. His bearing became more cocky, self-assured as he disengaged the clutch and moved out into the freeway. Suddenly I realized, as the huge bus shot forward, that he reminded me of Wolfgang von Tripps, Graham Hill.....any of a myriad of Grand Prix drivers -- JOHNNY COMET? In, out, around and down the straight away and around a curve the bus careened and rocked. Were those the cries of spectators or only the furious curses of other drivers who were forced to give way to the onrushing Juggernaut?

Down went the finish flag and, slowing down, the bus ground to a halt. We had arrived at the bus terminal. Grabbing my luggage I leaped to a waiting taxi and with a hearty, "To the Sheraton-Hilton!" we were off. With a roar the taxi zoomed three feet and stopped. Pedestrians were everywhere, a mindless mass stifling forward progress. Start, stop, start, stop -- a thousand, a million times this procedure was repeated. At last we halted and the driver announced that we had arrived at the hotel.

After I had registered and gotten settled in my room, hardly able to control my own enthusiasm, I nervously approached the telephone and lifting the receiver I began to dial. The phone on the other end rang once, twice, then....click!

"Hello!" a quiet, very feminine voice answered.
"Is Frank there!" I asked.
"No, he's not. Bob?" Ellie, Frank's wife, replied, then asked.
"Yes."
"Frank's not here right now, he's in the city delivering a job. I don't know when he'll get back. I wish I remembered where he said he was going and you could call him. Then he could pick you up and save you the trouble of taking the train. When would you like to come out?"
"Whenever is most convenient to you and Frank," I replied.
"How about this evening? Would six be all right?" Ellie questioned.
"Sure, that would be great," I answered.
"Okay. Do you know how to get out here? You just take the Long Island Railroad, you can catch it right under the hotel, and buy a ticket to North Merrick. Call when you arrive in Merrick and Frank can come after you."

After hanging up, I passed the time by walking around New York in the vicinity of the hotel and browsing in a number of bookstores. At last it was time to return to the hotel, shower, shave and go down to the train station below the hotel. Boarding the train, it seemed an eternity before it was underway. However, at long last it began to move and as the wheels clicked rhythmically over the rails I was soon lost in thoughts of speculation. Station after station passed and after a while I began to wonder if, unknown to me, we had already passed Merrick. My fears were soon laid to rest, however, when the conductor strode through the car shouting, "Merrick! Merrick! Next stop!"

Leaving the train I went to the nearest phone booth and tried to call Frank's home. The line was busy. I tried several more times but each time the line was busy so I decided to call a taxi. When the taxi arrived I got in and gave the driver my destination. "Ummm, where's that?" asked the cabbie.

I could tell that I had gotten hold of Merrick's most alert cab driver! After driving several blocks, the driver finally got his bearings and proceeded in what we hoped was the general direction. I was in luck, he finally located the correct street sign. Turning, he drove several blocks - then pulled to the curb and announced that I had reached my destination. Out I sprang!

Unmistakably, I was standing before the home of Frank Frazetta! It had an individuality about it that escaped the rest of the homes along the avenue. The stuccoed, Spanish-style house was set well back from the street. A small walk wound through unusual and exotic trees and shrubbery. On

TO JOE
FROM

a stalwart tree in front of me was nailed a rude plaque serrated on either end. On the plaque was painted FRAZETTA rendered in that well-known flourish! Yes, at last I was here!

Walking up to the front door, which was open, I knocked. I detected a shadowy form motioning me to enter. As I opened the screen door and stepped into the living room, the shadow solidified, becoming a strikingly beautiful young woman, blonde hair hanging below her shoulders. I knew instantly that this was Frank's wife, Ellie. Cupping her hand over the receiver of the telephone, into which she had been speaking, she said, "Frank's in back by the swimming pool." Then turning, she spoke out the back door, "Frank, Bob is here!"

Ellie motioned me to come on into the kitchen and as I crossed the wooden floors of the living room, my eyes roved the stuccoed walls seeing in the dim light several original oils, all by Frank, hanging thereon. Stopping momentarily before one, I was struck almost speechless. This was "The Reign of Wizardry," but as none before had ever seen it! This was most certainly not the one used for the cover of the Lancer paperback, which had been more subdued, unfinished. On another wall was the cover for EERIE #2 and also the cover for CREEPY #15.

Frank was just coming in the back door as I entered the kitchen. "Bob, how are you? Glad to meet you at last," he said as he held out his hand.
"I'm fine," I replied as I took his proferred hand, feeling the power of his grip. "It's a real pleasure meeting you."
"Have a seat," he said, motioning towards the table and chairs in the kitchen. "Would you like a beer?" he asked as I sat down.
"I don't mind if I do," I answered.

Setting the beer bottle on the table, Frank said, "This is Norwegian import beer and has a higher alcohol content than American beer."
"I don't mind," I replied, "I got used to drinking almost the same thing when I was in the service in Germany."

Drinking the beer, I took the opportunity to study this man whose work I had admired so long. A little over medium height, he was powerfully built -- not like a weight lifter, but more that of a trained athlete. I was astounded at how much he actually resembled many of the characters he drew so well -- Thun'da, Johnny Comet and so on. I mentioned this to Frank and asked him if he had consciously tried to use himself in much of his old comic work. Laughing, he replied, "Well, not really, although I did draw myself into the central character in that EC Shock story I did. I believe it was titled "Squeeze Play"!"

Ellie, finishing her phone conversation, joined us. Also about this time I glanced about me to the wall and hanging above my head was the original cover for Edgar Rice Burroughs' "The Mad King." Although small in comparison to most of the other originals that Frank has been painting, it is by far one of the most striking.

At eight o'clock, the telephone rang -- it was Vern Coriell, the well-known Burroughs fan, and his wife, Rita, here in New York to attend the NYCon and Burroughs Dum-Dum. Ellie asked them to come on over and at first they demurred but Ellie and Frank insisted. They arrived a short time later. After they arrived, Ellie said that while she fixed supper why didn't we go out to the pool with Frank and their children, Frank Jr., Billie and Holly (they have since added another member, a second daughter) -- to which we readily agreed. The water certainly looked inviting and I remarked, "If I only had a pair of trunks I'd jump in too!" Ellie, just stepping out the back door, overheard me and stated, "I can get you an extra pair of trunks if you'd really like to go in." I politely declined, however, after I stuck my hand in to see how cold the water was and pulled out five icicles! The kids didn't seem to mind it though, jumping and splashing as kids have since time began.

Frank had one of his cameras out taking pictures when Ellie informed us that supper was ready. As we all filed into the kitchen and sat down at the table, a wondrous aroma assailed our nostrils. On the table was a large bowl filled with spagetti while beside it was another bowl filled with meat balls, homemade sausage and spare-ribs. Spagetti, meat and beer were taken in copious quantity by one and all while conversation lagged for not a single minute. It was one of the most delicious and interesting meals of which it has ever been my pleasure to partake.

After the meal was finished, we continued to sit around the table and talk. Frank gathered up much of his old comic work to show us -- all the original THUN'DA art, the BUCK ROGERS covers, the "romance" jobs. One can't imagine the magnificence of these pages. The line work that was in these pieces was almost unbelievable! The publishers could have never hoped to do justice to them (and they didn't!).

After awhile we all moved into the living room where Frank does his painting. Stacked on a bench beside his drawing board were most of the paintings Frank has done for Lancer, CREEPY, EERIE and BLAZING COMBAT. Several of these were unique in that Frank further embellished them after getting them back from the publishers. "Conan the Adventurer" was being clutched about the leg by a woman in the fullest sense of the name -- not the dim, shadowy form which is seen on the cover of the book. The pale blonde "Leopard Girl" on the cover of CREEPY #16 has been transformed into a dark, black haired, sensuous jungle girl. "Reign of Wizardry," which I mentioned previously, is utterly fantastic!!! A true classic of fantasy art!

I was so overwhelmed that I couldn't help but ask if any of these classic paintings were available. At the time I asked, Ellie stated that she would let the cover for Lancer's "Secret People," which was a water color, go if I wanted it. I jumped at the chance! Then I began going through the other paintings again. For some reason, I kept picking up Frank's oil painting for "The Dark Kingdom," which appeared on CREEPY #9. I told Frank it was too bad that Ellie didn't want to let this one go -- that it had always been a favorite of mine. Frank replied, "I'm sure that she wouldn't mind selling this one!"
"Yes she does," I replied, "I asked her earlier about it."
"Let me talk to her," Frank said, and he went across the living room studio to ask Ellie if she was sure she wouldn't let me buy "The Dark Kingdom" rather than "The Secret People." As anyone who knows me can testify -- Frank was successful in his persuasion. I am now the very proud owner of the original cover from CREEPY #9!

I can't even begin to remember all that was discussed that evening. I was lost in a reverie of sight, sound and color. The personalities of Frank and his wife were overwhelming. But I had to bring myself back to reality as it was almost time for the last train to depart from Merrick back to New York City. Bidding Frank and Ellie goodbye, I assured them I would see them Friday when they checked into the hotel as guests of the Burroughs Bibliophiles. Frank, along with Hal Foster, was to be guest of honor at the Burroughs Banquet. Vern and Rita drove me to the depot to catch the train.

Thursday back at the hotel passed uneventfully. I did nothing more than register for the Science-Fiction Convention and wander around the "hucksters" room.

Friday, Vern, Rita and I waited in the lobby for Frank and his family. They arrived about mid-afternoon and Frank was carrying a large package under his arm. When asked what it contained he replied, "It's a surprise -- I'll unwrap and show it to you later,

in the hotel room." After Frank, Ellie and their children were registered, we all went up to their room. In the room, Frank gave the package to Vern and I to unwrap, which we did in all due haste!! The first thing that emerged was three pages from one of Frank's old DAN BRAND AND TIPI stories, from DURANGO KID #8. There was the first (or "splash") page, second page and the last page of the story. The rest were a number of original Sunday and daily panels from Frank's newspaper strip of the early 1950's, JOHNNY COMET. "I dug these up and thought some of the fans might like to buy some of them," stated Frank. "The three DAN BRAND pages were the only ones that Magazine Enterprises ever returned to me other than THUN'DA."

There was a sudden flurry as Vern and I made a mad scramble for the DAN BRAND pages. Faster than light, I made a grab for the "splash" page. Successful, I danced with glee! Vern grabbed the last page.

After that, we all decided to leave and wander around the rooms where the Science Fiction Convention was to be held. The artists room, hucksters room, etc. Finding out that Frank Frazetta was there, the fans were drawn like bears to honey! Later, returning to the hotel room, Frank decided that maybe he should have brought some of his paintings to show the fans. Asking if I'd like to accompany him, Billie and Frank, Jr. back to Merrick, I quickly voiced an affirmative and we left for the subway which would take us to the vicinity in which Frank had parked his station wagon.

Arriving at Frank's home, we first went to the kitchen where we raided the ice box for some supper. We polished off what meat had been left from Wednesday night, topping it with bread, cheese and beer. Then we gathered up several of the paintings, some of the older comic work we thought the fans might like to view, and headed back to New York.

On the way back we stopped at the home of Roy G. Krenkel, perhaps Frank's best friend. Frank wanted to see if he would like to go into the city with us and also to pick up an old, unpublished job that Frank had almost completed for the EC publishers. The magazine, in which it was to have appeared, folded along with most of the other EC publications except MAD magazine. As it turned out, Roy wasn't at home and his mother told Frank that he had already gone into New York. However, Frank did pick up the picto-fiction job, "Came the Dawn," and I must say that it is some of the most outstanding pen, brush and ink work that I have ever seen from Frank or, for that matter, any other artist presently in the illustrative field.

Back in the hotel I proceeded to gather up what fans I could locate and bring them up to Frank's room. When they found out there were some JOHNNY COMET originals for sale, they started grabbing for their billfolds. After business, Frank and I broke out the paintings, amid the "Ooohs and Aahs" of the fans. They were overwhelmed, to say the least. The party finally broke up around three o'clock and we all left for our respective rooms for some well needed sleep. Since the Burroughs Banquet was at twelve-thirty, I left word with the desk to call my room about nine o'clock the next morning.

Me (with head in the clouds) and Frank, Jr.

It seemed as if I had just dropped onto the bed when a faint ringing impinged itself on my consciousness. Then fully awake, I realized it was the phone -- covers flying, I jumped from the bed and made a grab for the receiver - it was the desk clerk announcing that it was nine. Thanking him, I hung up the receiver and proceeded to shower, shave and get dressed. Not wanting breakfast to interfere with my appetite prior to the Burroughs luncheon, I decided to do without.

Returning once again to the phone, I dialed Frank's room and after a couple of rings Ellie answered, saying that she, Frank and the kids had just gotten up. She asked me to give them half an hour then come on up. Deciding that Frank

would want to go direct to the Penn-Garden Hotel, which was about a block from the Sheraton-Hilton, and where the Burroughs Dum-Dum would be held, I changed into my suit. Then I read through Wally Wood's latest issue of WITZEND regaling the butchery of Frank's strip, "Tiga." Noticing that half an hour had almost lapsed, I decided to go on up to Frank's room.

Arriving at the Penn-Garden we were told that the Coral Room wasn't open yet so we decided to wait in the lobby for Vern, who arrived shortly after. Again we went down to see if the Coral Room was open, and this time it was. The banquet was a huge success. First they served the food -- salisbury steak, potatoes and gravey, etc., topped off by a large wedge of apple pie. After everyone was through eating, Bob Hyde, president of the Burroughs Bibliophiles, arose and after introducing the guests of honor presented each with an engraved bowl. After the presentations were made, Bob introduced Robert Hodes, the new manager of ERB Inc., who gave a short talk about what is being planned for the future in the way of publication of works by and about Edgar Rice Burroughs, then showed a copy of the new Burroughs "First Edition" - "I Am A Barbarian." After this the banquet was turned over to the fans who were eager to get autographs from Frank Frazetta and Hal Foster. This lasted until late in the afternoon; then we all returned to Frank's room for another session equal to that of Friday night. Aside from the fans, Roy Krenkel and Jim Sterenko were also present. It was a real pleasure to meet Roy Krenkel whose work I admire highly; and I must say that he is a very interesting and remarkable person. Again it was around three o'clock in the morning before the last person straggled out. Frank and Ellie, just before I left for my room, asked if I would like to check out on the morrow and return to Merrick with them to spend the rest of my New York visit with them. Do I need repeat what my excited answer was?

I didn't awake until about ten Sunday morning and after shaving and dressing I called Frank's room. Ellie finally answered the phone and judging from the drowsy quality of her voice, I didn't need to be told that I had awakened her. She said that none of them were up yet so I said why didn't she go back to bed and I would call again around eleven, to which she readily agreed!

At eleven, I called again and Ellie told me to come on up. After I arrived, we waited for Vern and Rita -- then we all went down to the hotel coffee shop for a late breakfast. After eating, we went back to Frazetta's room where we packed up the paintings and other art work in preparation for the return trip to the Frazetta home. I went down to the desk to check out and Rita went with me to check out the Frazettas. After taking care of our hotel bill, we went back to the room where we all chatted for awhile -- then left for Frank's station wagon and then on to Merrick. The ride was interesting but uneventful, although it did give me a chance to see more than I would normally have if I had stayed at the hotel.

Arriving at Frank's home, we just sat around relaxed and talking. After Frank had changed clothes and relaxed for awhile, he asked if I'd like to go over to the school and play a little baseball. I replied with an eager, "Yes!"
"Do you play any now?" he asked.
"Well, it's been about fifteen years since I have been on any kind of ball diamond or thrown a ball," I said, thinking all the time ... I hope I don't make an ass out of myself!

The school was only a few blocks from Frank's home; and after we got there, Billie and I played field while Frank pitched to Frank, Jr. We played for a couple of hours, each of us taking a turn at bat and pitching. I didn't do too good at picking up flys but I like to think that I didn't do too bad at bat.
"You've got a good arm and you put plenty of power behind the bat," Frank told me. "You just have to polish it up a little."

From a man of Frank's background this, to me at least, was high praise! Especially since Frank had been good enough to have been offered a contract with the New York Yankees. After trying several times to put the ball over the school ground fence (he did bounce it off the fence a couple of times), Frank said that we'd better get back for supper.

Frank, Jr.

Frank asked me how I liked pizza and, after I replied that I did, he stopped on the way at a local pizza parlor and picked up two; then we stopped at the heighborhood grocers for some soda pop. Back at Frank's home, we made short work of the pizzas and then retired to the living room. "Did you get to see any of Frank's early work when you were here last Wednesday, Bob?" Ellie asked. "No I didn't," I replied, "I stayed in the kitchen and talked with Frank and Vern."

Billie

Going to a small chest beside the fireplace, above which was mounted authentic Masai lion spears and an African shield and masks, she opened it and drew out a paste-board box. It was filled with several small composition notebooks and homemade booklets. The composition books, for the most part, contained pen and ink sketches and figure studies. Many were copies of well-known characters created by Milton Caniff. One composition book contained a complete story, hand painted, of "Snowman" and Frank informed me that it was this story which had been adapted for TALLY HO #1. I could hardly believe it! This story had twice the artistic talent behind it than the one which appeared as a collaboration with John Giunta in TALLY HO. There was much more style and development both artistically and script-wise.

The homemade booklets were all creations of Frank, in three parts or chapters. They were mostly pencil work but it was extremely fine and exquisite. One, "The Cave Girl," was clearly an adaptation of the novel by Edgar Rice Burroughs -- which again brought to my mind the thought of the similarities between CAVE GIRL and THUN'DA. Another, "The Panther Legend," was a tale of a beautiful girl who changed into a black panther when embraced by men -- you can imagine their surprise! It was quite unusual and unique, and very, very good. And yet another - "The Gray Phantom" - was a super-hero story. Others were tales of knighthood and medieval splendor, of the American frontier, and of the World War -- the Air war.

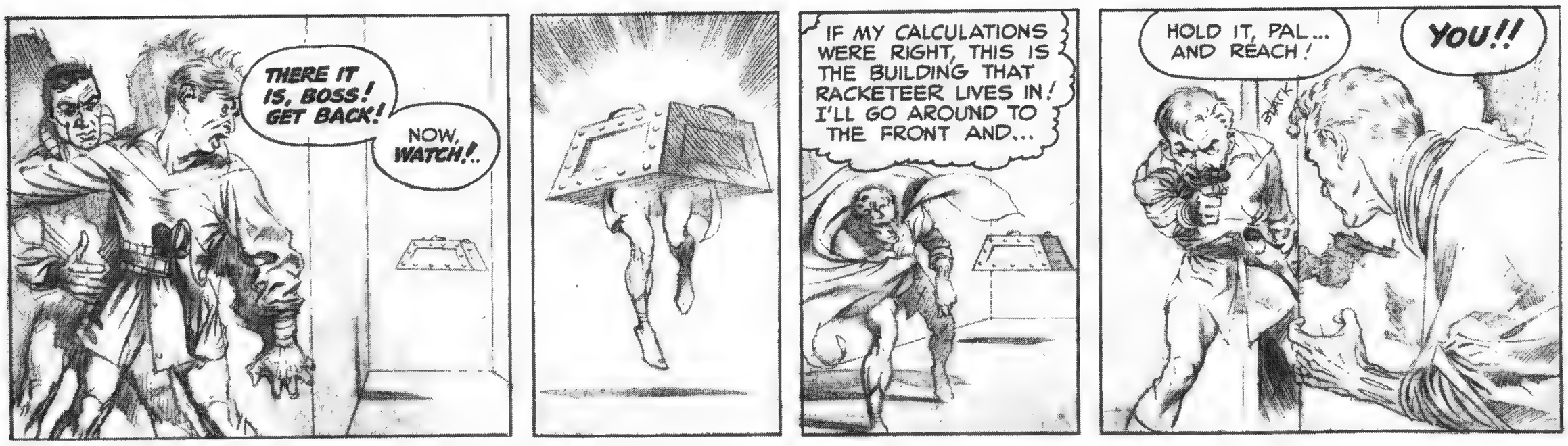
After I had soaked up what was in this box Frank asked me to come down to the basement where he was going to develop some of the film he had taken. When I descended, I saw stacks and stacks of old comic art by Frank. Sunday and daily panels of "Johnny Comet," "Li'l Abner" panels. Originals from some of his old "funny animal" work. Pages from one of the "Know Your America" stories from TREASURE COMICS. More sketch books. The Composition Notebook in which, as a boy, he copied almost an entire anatomy book so he could learn anatomy. A large pen and ink of FLASH GORDON fending off a large space beast, ugly, humanoid. A large charcoal of a jungle girl companioned by a black panther -- it was beautiful! Finally I had to return upstairs as Frank had to turn the lights out so he could remove the film and get the negatives developed. I watched the late movie, "The Great Imposter," with Ellie. After this, we said our good nights and turned in.

I awoke about seven o'clock Monday morning and, as the Frazettas weren't up yet, I lay there and mused over what I had experienced the past few days. I could hardly believe all that had happened had truly transpired. At nine o'clock everyone got up and, while Ellie prepared breakfast, I helped Billie and Frank, Jr. catch spiders for their pet lizards. After breakfast, we gathered up several of Frank's paintings and carried them outside into the bright, morning sunlight. Frank had consented to photographing them for me. I had a new camera and, besides being unfamiliar with it, I knew that Frank could take much better quality slides with his Canon than I could with my Yashica. After this, we decided that I had better get everything together and return to the hotel for my luggage, which I had left in Vern's room. My plane was to leave at six forty-five.

Back at the hotel, I looked up Vern and Rita and we all stood around chatting until I realized that if I didn't get moving I'd miss my plane -- maybe it was a reluctance to leave, even though I was anxious to get back to my wife. Outside the hotel, I shook Frank's hand, received a goodbye kiss from Ellie, and started to thank Frank for his generous hospitality and everything he had done to make my visit such a pleasant one. "Words aren't necessary, Bob. We all know how we feel. It was a real pleasure

Continued after Reed Crandall article.....

900 YEARS IN THE FUTURE...
BOSS! HEY, BOSS!
HELLO, KID! I WAS JUST GOING OUT!
BOSS! I JUST SAW SOMETHING! YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT! I'M STANDIN' IN AN ALLEY, SEE...?
AN' ALL OF A SUDDEN I SEE THIS FLOATIN' BOX! THEN — ZOWIE! OUT POPS THIS GUY — RIGHT OUTA THIN AIR!
MAYBE YOU NEED A VACATION, KID! ... A WEEK IN LUNAR CITY, MAYBE?
HONEST, BOSS! I FOLLOWS THE GUY, SEE? THEN HE STEPS BACK IN THE BOX AN'... POP!... THEY BOTH GO UP IN THIN AIR AGAIN! IT ALL HAPPENS IN AN ALLEY... JUST LIKE... LIKE ...
HEY, BOSS!
FRAZETTA


THERE IT IS, BOSS! GET BACK!
NOW, WATCH!..
IF MY CALCULATIONS WERE RIGHT, THIS IS THE BUILDING THAT RACKETEER LIVES IN! I'LL GO AROUND TO THE FRONT AND...
HOLD IT, PAL... AND REACH!
BACK
YOU!!

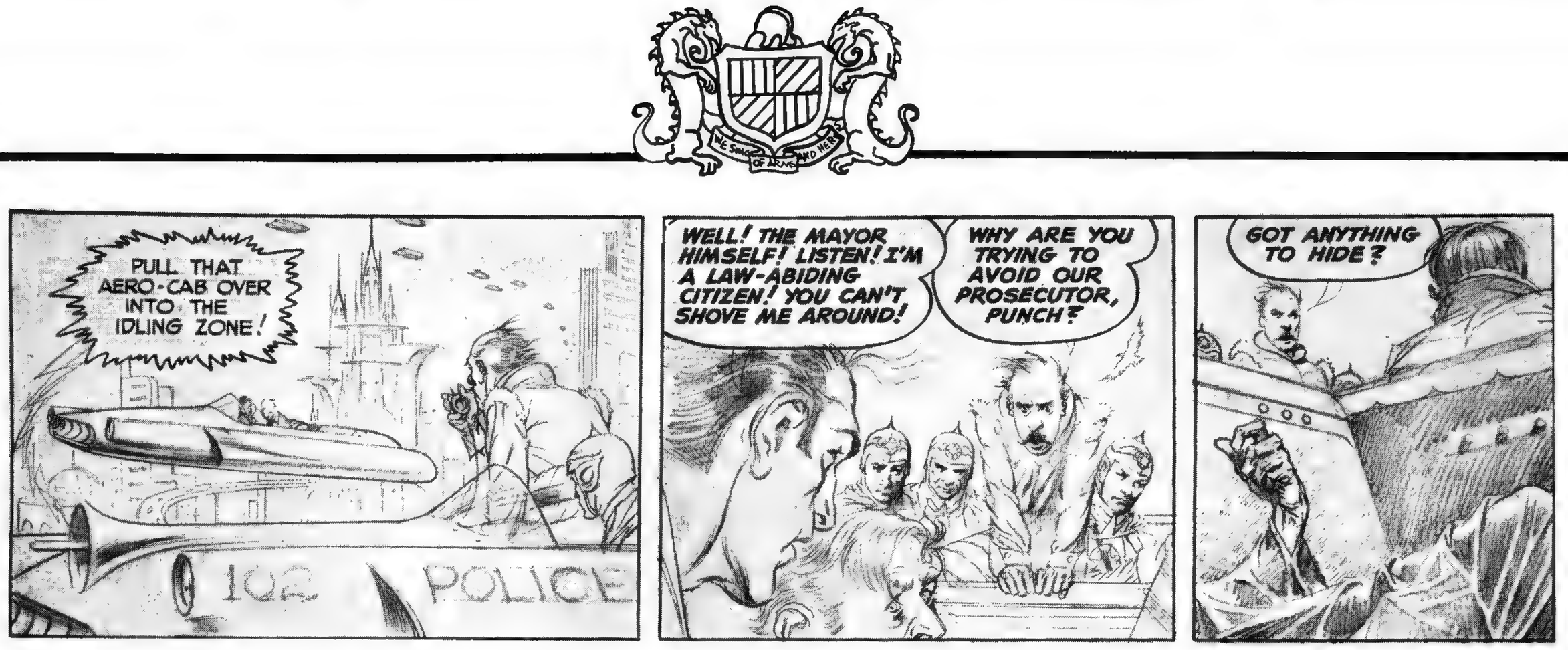
ART BY FRANK FRAZETTA

REACH, BUSTER!... WHA..?!
IT'S HIM! THE MAN WHO'S SUPPOSED TO MURDER MURLIN!
ALL RIGHT, FELLA — GIVE! WHO ARE YOU — AND WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
HANDS OFF, MAC! YOU BETTER ANSWER THEM QUESTIONS FIRST!
IT WOULD SUIT ME FINE TO PULL THIS TRIGGER, FELLA! YOU'D BETTER SPEAK UP...
GET 'IM, BOSS!
HOLD IT!
BOYS! HELP! GIVE ME A HAND OUT HERE!

ART BY FRANK FRAZETTA

BOYS! HELP!
THAT TAKES CARE OF ONE... NOW FOR YOU...
TWO DOWN! I'D BETTER DUCK BEFORE HELP GETS H... WHOOF!
OKAY, BOYS! DRAG HIM INTO THE APARTMENT, THEN BEAT IT!
I'D LIKE TO GIVE THIS WISEGUY A GOING OVER, BOSS!
HOLD IT, GEORGIE!
WHILE WE WERE TUSSLING WITH THIS GUY, THAT TRICK 'FLOATING BOX' DISAPPEARED...
...WHEN HE COMES TO, THIS JOKER'S GOING TO TELL US ALL ABOUT THAT GADGET—JUST LEAVE IT TO 'BOSS PUNCH'!

ART BY FRANK FRAZETTA


PULL THAT AERO-CAB OVER INTO THE IDLING ZONE!
102
POLICE
WELL! THE MAYOR HIMSELF! LISTEN! I'M A LAW-ABIDING CITIZEN! YOU CAN'T SHOVE ME AROUND!
WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO AVOID OUR PROSECUTOR, PUNCH?
GOT ANYTHING TO HIDE?
PUNCH! WE KNOW YOU'RE RUNNING THE RACKETS AT THE CARGO-LOADING SPACE PLATFORMS OFF SHORE! WE HAVEN'T PROVED IT YET, BUT WE'RE GOING TO TRY!
AND WE'RE STARTING WITH THIS!..
...A SUMMONS TO APPEAR BEFORE A PLANETARY INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE!
HAH! YOU GUYS ARE JUST ITCHING TO SEND ME UP TO THE MARS PRISON! BUT YOU CAN'T GET A THING ON ME! I'M CLEAN AS A NEW SNOWFALL!
GRO-OAN!

ART BY FRANK FRAZETTA

DAYS of WINE &...oo FLEAGLES?!

by

NICK MEGLIN

Williamson was finished with his job and was turning it in to E.C. that afternoon. Frazetta looked out his window, realized it was a lousy day to work--which meant it was a beautiful day for playing ball--so he called Al and told him that he'd pick him up and drive into Manhattan with him. Krenkel was already at Williamson's, inking the background of a city that "2001" couldn't match, so he was invited also for the trip to the School of Visual Arts. It was close to 3:00 PM and there was no parking space, so Frank posted Al and Roy at the front door to watch for Torres and myself to file out while he circled the block several times. They did, and we did, then it was on to the offices of E.C. Feldstein and Gaines loved Al's job and that was that. As we walked out, Williamson stuck his head into Johnny Craig's office to say, "Hello-goodbye." Kurtzman was talking to Craig at the time, and Johnny waved Al in. Al, in turn, waved us in, and Kurtzman took one look at the motley crew assembled before him and shouted-- "Good Lord--The Fleagle Gang!"

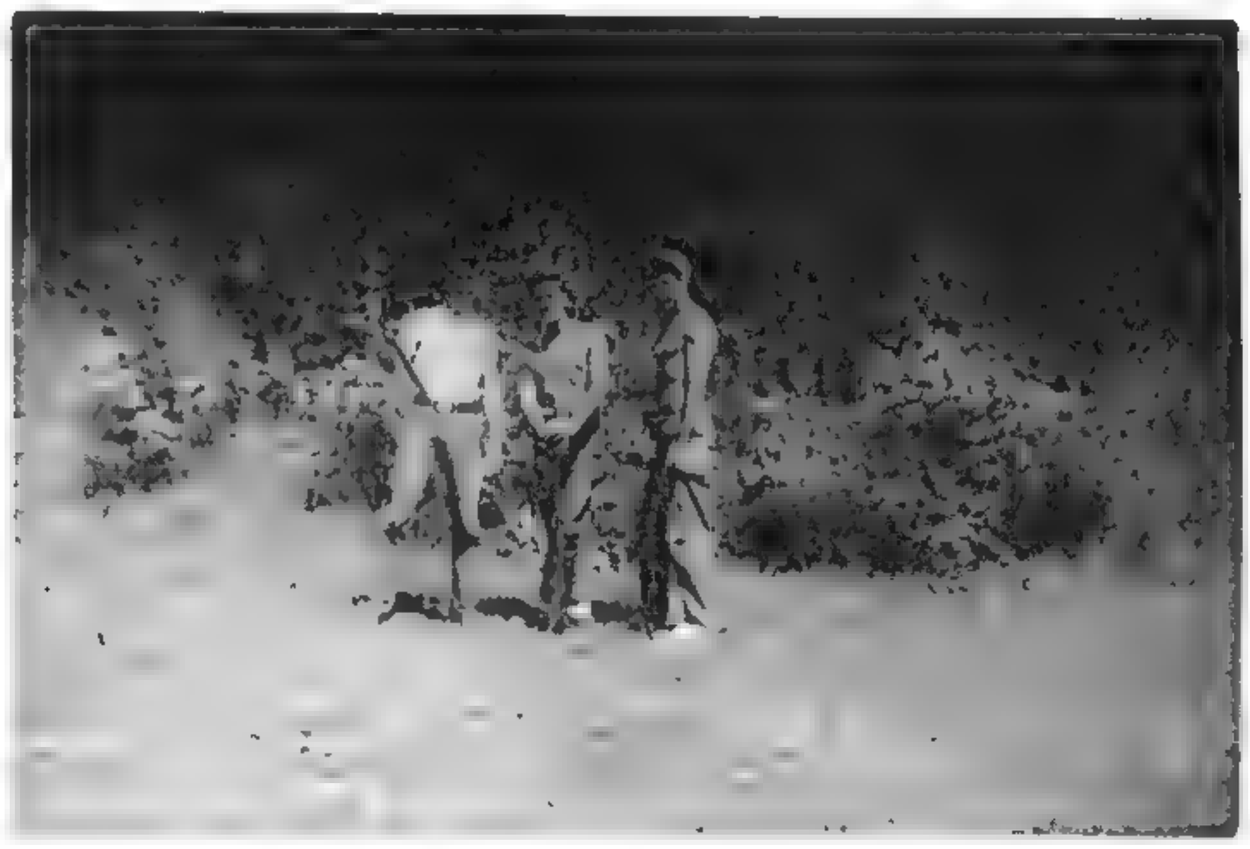
Thus was born the nickname that is still associated with us as incificuals, though the "Fleagle Gang" in itself no longer exists. George Woodbridge was another charter member, but he, the only one of us married at the time, didn't goof off as much as the rest of us, having a little one that understood Pablum in the belly more than ball in the glove.

Many afternoons were spent chasing Frazetta's long blasts, whether in the meadows of Central Park or in the schoolyard near Fritz's studio in Sheepshead Bay (Brooklyn, for the out-of-towners). The latter was preferred, for the schoolyard was also in walking distance to Frank's parent's home, and Mrs. Frazetta would never bat an eye when her son walked in with three or four of us, without notice, at dinner time. Frank was like that!

You had to know him to understand what I'm talking about. Many of his fans, looking at his cover paintings, old comic jobs, JOHNNY COMET, Famous Funnies covers, etc., could never believe that Fritz was something besides a helluva good artist! They'd have to see his delight in rounding the bases after socking one over the fence in a neighborhood game that won each of us the grand stakes of a quarter--never taking into account that in the time of the nine inning game he could have pencilled a page--perhaps inked it as well--and made himself $50 (high rates considering when it was). There are other sides of Frank that would be fun talking about but Ellie might read this and.... Well, you know how women are!!!

Fritz about to drive Angelo Torres into the ground on a hunting trip up near Syracuse many years back. George Woodbridge looks on--does he save his school buddy, or does he allow Fritz to hammer home his point? The answer follows.....

NEITHER! Old Ange turns the tide on both. I was behind the camera and couldn't do anything--not even take a decent shot, as the fade-out at the top will verify!



George, Frank and myself pose for Ange, but the top of the frame fades out once again. Can't be me to blame -- gotta be the camera.

He loved to draw too, but not only or always. In the neighborhood, where many followed his younger baseball career in the Parade Grounds League (he was considered a sure fire bet for the Majors), few knew he was an artist at all. Fritz was never a "money artist." He would work to the point of meeting his bills, then take off for weeks at a time until the bills got to that point again. He was offered strips, deals, contracts--stuff that art students dream of--and turn it down for no other reason than it would cramp his style, which wasn't high living, but free living. Fritz liked to play each day as it came. Deadlines got in the way, but he would meet them the last minute and everyone would be happy. If his work is now held in such esteem, try and imagine what it could have been had he

How's this for a combo--Hal Foster and Fritz. This shot was taken at one of the NCS picnics at Fred Waring's place some years back.

From this day on, Ellie (nee Kelly), or Mrs. Fritz, as we sometimes teased, became keeper of the Frazetta Archives. Thanks to Ellie, Frank now has a batch of his own originals, being much too free with them in the past.

really worked at it! Perhaps better....but, in thinking it over, maybe worse! His work was an extension of his personality, and his imaginative approach to everything he handles has got to stem from a free, roaming spirit and not a caged one.

The work that is hardly mentioned at all when one talks of Frazetta is work that I liked as much as the stuff that gets all the raves--Fritz's animation! His animals were as cute as hell, moved around a page in a way that was all Fritz; and when he himself colored them, well, Disney looked twice. In truth, Frank was offered many deals by animation studios and, if memory serves me correctly, the Disney Studios included. But this would be more restricting than most work available to him so he passed it up. But I'll say this --give me a drawing of a nutty-looking squirrel by Fritz and then give me the best cover he's done and I'll prove nothing, maybe, but I'll run like hell with both pieces of work and just try and catch me! Especially now, with Fritz fans paying unbelievable rates for a napkin the guy wiped his hands on! We didn't think, in those days, that anything would have the value (monetarily) that it does. I could have retired had I asked Frank for all the things he would have given me gladly. Frank was generous--to a fault--and luckily his Ellie curbed it! (Ellie, nee Kelly, Mrs. Fritz - being his biggest fan - wants EVERYTHING he does) or he would have nothing today and some characters would be floating around selling everything he's done and getting rich in the process!

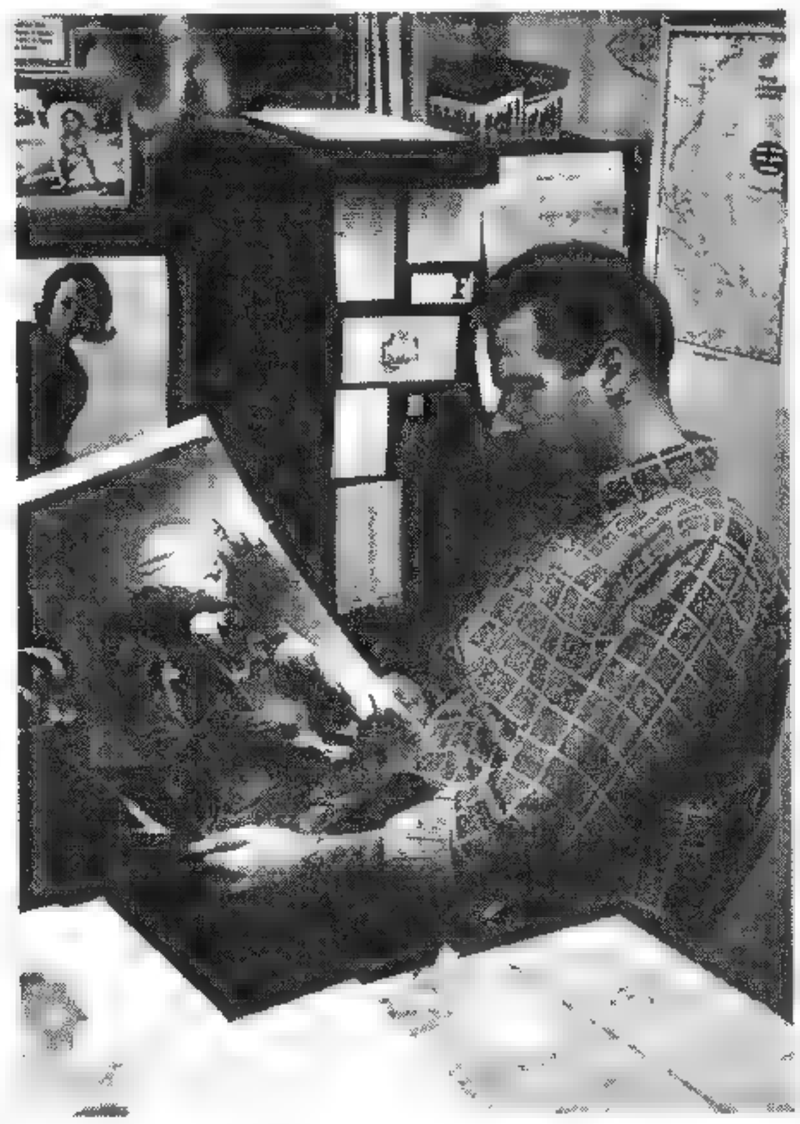
I treasure a double-page spread he did for HEROIC COMICS about little boys saving a drowning horse. Frank did the job and was quite pleased with it himself, but everyone always wanted some sword-swinging gladiator or spaceman from Frank and didn't appreciate his fine sense of design, his light touches, his sensitive handling of sensitive subjects as much. When I saw the job, I flipped; and Fritz was so pleased at the reaction, without telling me a word he presented the original art to me when he got it back after publication. I had picked out two daily JOHNNY COMET strips one time, because I thought that strip really had something, and gave both away to fans who wanted them even more than I did. Jerry De Fuccio was one, and his still is framed on his wall. The other shall remain nameless, but I've been told that it was sold as soon as Frazetta's work began demanding astronomic heights. I hope Ellie keeps even his empty paint tubes when I hear

stories like that. Let them cherish the printed work which was meant for their eyes, and let the originals stay in the family! It's only fair! By now, 90% of the readers are turning off this soap box oratory, wishing I'd shut up! I might louse up their chances for a Frazetta original! Don't worry--you'll get one! There's enough floating around by "fans" who'll be happy to sell you theirs. (Ed. Note: NOT ME!) I guess I shouldn't talk. A few years back, I was in bad shape and sold some stuff that was partly ruined in a basement flood. The prices I asked were not like what I've seen lately, and maybe that's why I'm shpeeling--sour grapes! But try and get the HEROIC job from me! Go ahead! Just try!

As for Frank's drawing habits, I recall just a few anecdotes which will help some of his imitators not one iota (and boy, does Frank get imitated!) Or is traced better?" And the same guys swear "I don't have a Frazetta in front of me when I draw!" What for? After you've memorized every line, approach, mannerism, shading technique, etc., you don't HAVE TO have a Fritz in front of you. Inspiration is one thing. Even Fritz admired the work of others (in comics, Alex Toth and Jack Kirby comes to mind). But to see this guy sit down with a blank page at 11:00 PM and have a Famous Funnies cover penciled in by 3:00 in the morning (that you know he had to use reference for--BUT DIDN'T--I was there --he DIDN'T!)--that's an artist! His pencil? We'd always try and sneak a look at the magical devices that did the work for him. What make? What style? And we were always disappointed to see it was some little stump of a three-for-a-nickel variety! Same with his magical inking brushes. One fan offered to buy an old one from Frank for a few bucks --as if it was the BRUSH that gave Frank the inking craftsmanship and not the hand (Frank didn't sell it to me).

I think I've said enough this time around. I'll pick it up again next issue, gang... same time, same station.

---Nick Meglin--



Yours truly is the first living creature to have seen this cover for CREEPY (except maybe Ellie). Frank had stopped up to MAD and as we talked, he snapped away with his omnipresent 35mm. camera.

REED CRANDALL

Winslow, Indiana, in the year of 1917, saw the birth of one Reed Crandall. As Reed has said many times since, "I was drawing with anything I could get my hands on ever since I can remember." The Crandall family moved to Newton, Kansas when Reed was 13 and Reed spent his high school days developing his art talent. Upon graduating from High School, Reed won a scholarship to the Cleveland School of Art. The Cleveland school was attended for four years and at the end Reed was honored by the school with the GSA Traveling Scholarship.

One year later found Reed in New York - the Comic Book Capital. He became friends with Will Eisner and Jerry Inger, doing work for both. Around the early '40's, Reed's work could be found most of the time in QUALITY Comics. Reed was a regular with such characters as Firebrand, Doll Man, The Ray - and to a greater extent - Blackhawk. Some of Reed's finest work was done for BLACKHAWK Comics, and ironically when E.C. decided to give BLACKHAWK comics a NEW look many years later in the late 1960's they remembered Reed, asking him to take on some work - but Reed refused..... BLACKHAWK just wasn't the same any more. During this early period, there was also some work with Simon and Kirby. Fiction House carried some of Reed's work for a while and one memorable issue Reed turned out 14 pages of what was to become a masterpiece! JUNGLE COMICS, lead story, "Kaanga and the Master of the Moon Beasts," held such a fantastic splash page by Reed that it would turn up again and again, re-interpretated by other artists. Fiction House even traced over it and used it for a cover 25 issues later. JUNGLE COMICS #42 held this great work, and for a young Reed Crandall, in the year 1943 - this was superb artwork!

CRACK WESTERN #75, CRACK COMICS #57, DOLL-MAN #42, FEATURE COMICS #105, HIT COMICS #63, KEN SHANNON #6, MILITARY COMICS #18, MODERN COMICS #72 and #74, POLICE COMICS #113 and #116, all contain covers by Reed usually followed by interior work.

When Quality began selling out in the early 1950's, Reed found himself associated with E.C. From the start, the work of Reed Crandall found immediate acceptance with the readership - and the artist had found a home! Reed got in with E.C. at the end of the "NEW TREND" and stayed with them through the "NEW, NEW TREND" and the PICTO-FICTIONS. PIRACY was one title that featured cover work as well as interior stories. There was cover work for the two E.C. Picto-Fiction titles CRIME ILLUSTRATED and TERROR ILLUSTRATED, fascinating in that they were usually presented in no more than two colors. The interior work for the Picto-Fiction titles is much the same as Reed's work for CREEPY and EERIE, being more similar to his style during the E.C. days and showing more evidence of Reed's ability with the brush.

After E.C., Reed found himself doing work for Atlas and Classics Comics. During this period much of his work went unheralded since it was so hard to find just where he was working. However, if the serious Crandall fan wishes to dig into the Pre-Hero Marvel's of the years '58, '59, '60, and '61, he will find the work of one Reed Crandall in surprising amounts.

From this period until today, TREASURE CHEST COMICS has taken a great amount of Reed's time, as well with research as with artwork. Each job must be carefully researched out - since this is work for a purely educational comic. For quite some time, Reed had a daily schedule of going to the library in the morning and drawing and inking in the afternoon.

Reed's work for CREEPY and EERIE of late, has once again captured the attention of fandom - bringing much to the black and white format of these magazines. Burroughs fans are now familiar with the name Reed Crandall because of his involvement with Canaveral. There has been work for FLASH GORDON, WITZEND, SQUATRONT, and TOWER COMICS that has been of exceptional merit. For another side of Reed, have a listen to George Evans.

When Reed Crandall and yours truly began working together, he knocked hell out of carefully laid plans, worked my rump off, and cost me quite some dough. For all that, I'm grateful, and Jerry has given me this chance to say thanks.

Nutty? Wait. It was like this: at the time, the only consistent account I could turn up was with Classics Illustrated, and if their rates weren't the lowest in the comics industry, they weren't far from it. But they gave out whole books--so the answer obviously was to work as fast as possible. Bash it out, cutting corners and faking all the way. The first couple of jobs I did for them were done just that way. They were satisfied, and for time spent, the money wasn't too bad.

When Al Williamson told me Reed was able to take on some work if it could be handled by mail. I checked, and Reed agreed to pencil--even at the rates I could offer. I told him the plan: Fast, Free-wheeling, Faked--and Forgotten, to paraphrase an old line.

I sent the whole script, which he was to return in segments, and meanwhile, I would scrounge around the agencies for shorter, more profitable bits. But almost by return mail, half the pencilled stuff was back. I thought, "Geez--said fast; but this fast, it has to be lousy."

Then I opened it, and by God, there in meticulous tight pencilling was the most beautiful comic art I ever saw. And friends, I include Alex Raymond and Harold Foster in their prime at that.

Well--do you think I could sit down and ink that kind of stuff with both hands flying? In common sense I should've jumped on those scenes into silhouettes, slashed out backgrounds, cut all the beautiful shadow modelling down to straight outline.

Couldn't do it.

So I sat on my tail and sweated and lost money like a fool--but fortunately, only for the time. Because I couldn't help learning a little and improving a little. The stuff got noticed. I got better offers. So did Reed! He did what he could for me for as long as he could. When we split, he sure left me better than he found me!

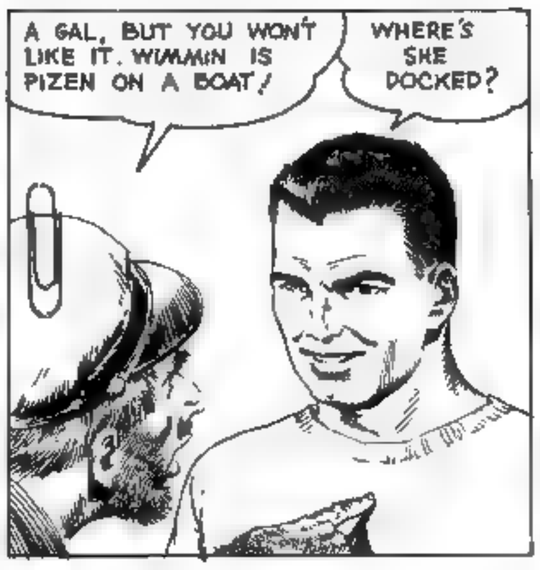
That's the way it is with partner. As a person, I've found him as great as he is an artist. All our dealings were by mail, but there's a standing invitation to Reed to visit the Evanses any time, and he's invited us to see the glories of Kansas. But when we do meet it's always at some mutual friend's. I'd bet everyone who knows Reed would describe him as "a real quiet guy." Yet thinking back, I can tell you, he's always got the sharpest lines in any discussion: the most meaningful, most perceptive--and surely the wittiest.

You'd figure you've got to dislike a guy with all that going for him. But everyone I know thinks the world of Reed Crandall. And for me--I'll add to that a world of thanks.

Sincerely,

GEORGE EVANS

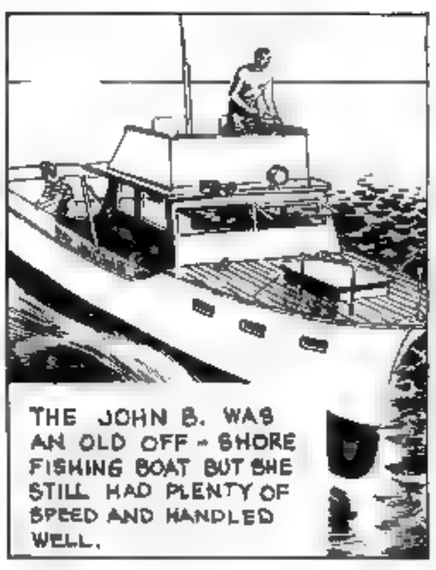
KNOW OF ANYONE THAT NEEDS A SKIPPER, CAP?
YEAH

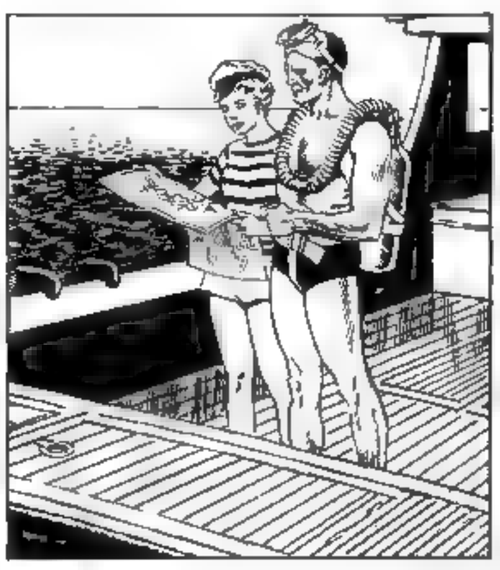

A GAL, BUT YOU WON'T LIKE IT. WIMMIN IS PIZEN ON A BOAT!
WHERE'S SHE DOCKED?

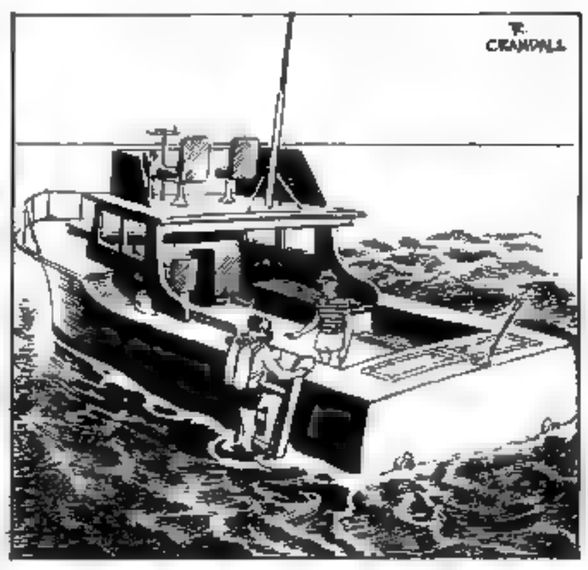
DOWN RIVER, THE JOHN B., BUT MARK MY WORDS YOU'LL SEE NUTHIN' BUT BAD LUCK IF YOU TAKE HER OUT!
THANKS

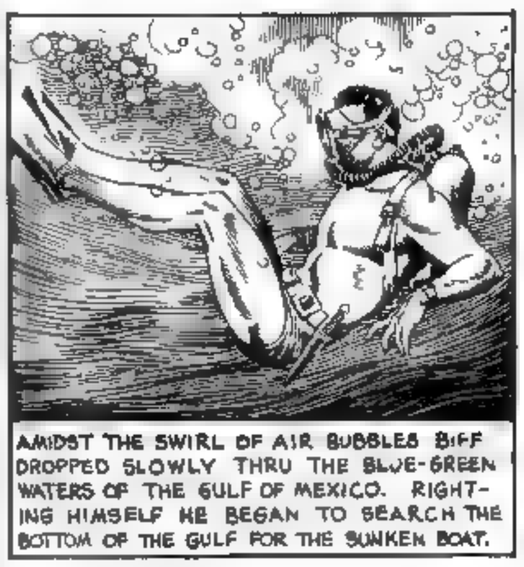
SO YOU CAN NAVIGATE. I NEED A SKIN-DIVER TOO. EVER DONE ANY? NAME'S JACKIE.
A LITTLE. MINE'S BIFF.
R CRANDALL

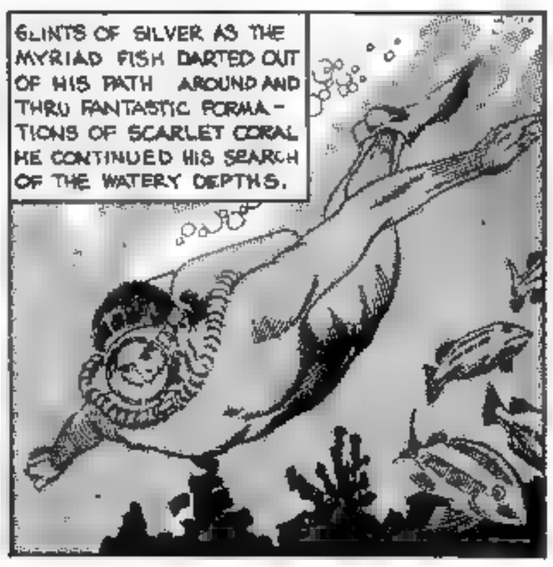
WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO THE JOB IN A DAY. I WANT TO BRING UP A SMALL METAL BOX FROM A SUNKEN BOAT OFF TORTUGA REEF. I'LL PAY TWO BILLS. IF YOU WANT THE JOB – BE HERE FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
I'LL BE HERE.

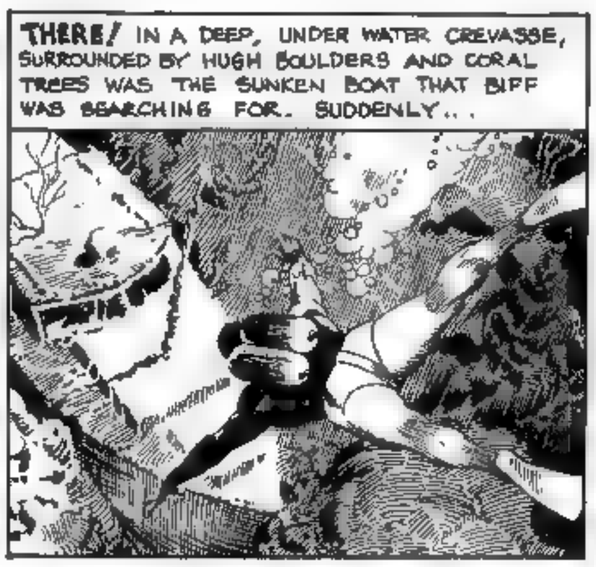

THE JOHN B. WAS AN OLD OFF-SHORE FISHING BOAT BUT SHE STILL HAD PLENTY OF SPEED AND HANDLED WELL.



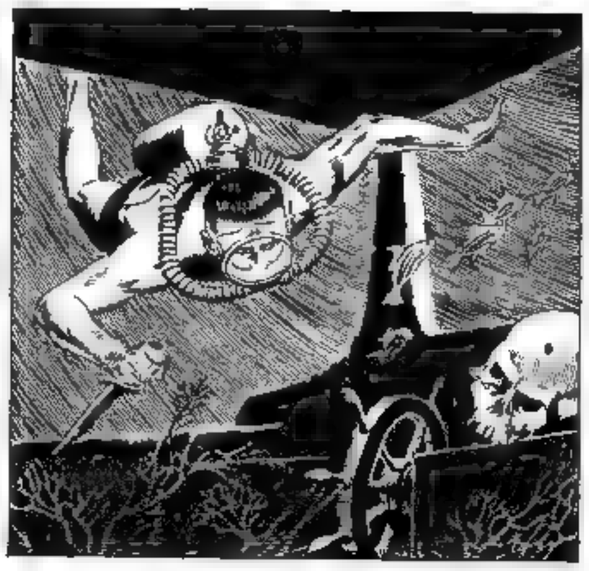

R CRANDALL


AMIDST THE SWIRL OF AIR BUBBLES BIFF DROPPED SLOWLY THRU THE BLUE-GREEN WATERS OF THE GULF OF MEXICO. RIGHTING HIMSELF HE BEGAN TO SEARCH THE BOTTOM OF THE GULF FOR THE SUNKEN BOAT.


GLINTS OF SILVER AS THE MYRIAD FISH DARTED OUT OF HIS PATH AROUND AND THRU FANTASTIC FORMATIONS OF SCARLET CORAL HE CONTINUED HIS SEARCH OF THE WATERY DEPTHS.


THERE! IN A DEEP, UNDER WATER CREVASSE, SURROUNDED BY HUGH BOULDERS AND CORAL TREES WAS THE SUNKEN BOAT THAT BIFF WAS SEARCHING FOR. SUDDENLY...

R CRANDALL



CRANDALL

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From the collection of Joe Vucenic

Jan seized the heavy chain which hung from his collar and swung it back in retaliation. It caught the first mate a terrific blow across the face.

CALL OF THE SAVAGE by Otis A. Kline

Just as the beast was about to close upon La of Opar she saw the hurtling body of the ape-man strike the tawny beast. ----TARZAN ON MARS by John Bloodstone (Stuart J. Byrne) ----

To my VERY
GOOD FRIEND
BOB

FRANK FRAZETTA

Science-Fiction Article Cont'd.

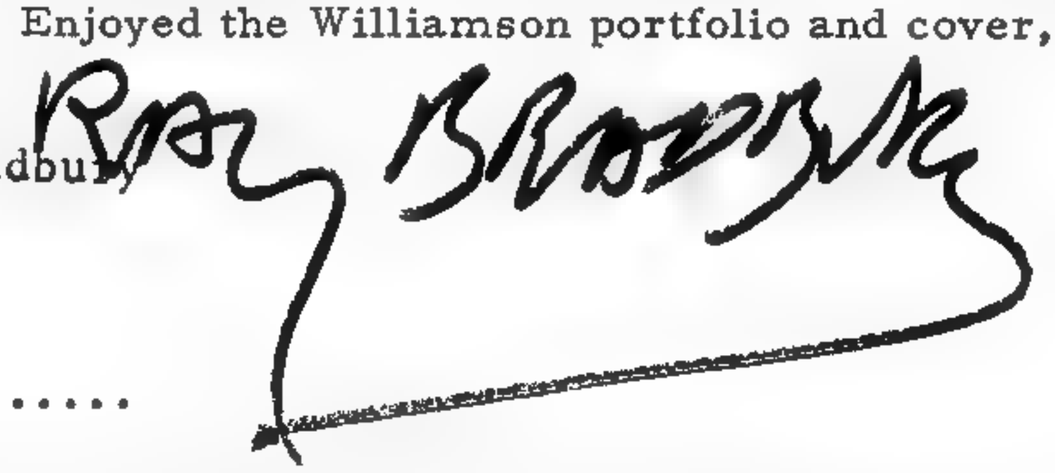
Perhaps I reach too high, but the comparison is worth making. Our comic illustrators do NOT equal the work of the Fra Angelicos of that old world. But I make the comparison because I do want people to pay attention to the decent work, the good work, and occasionally the fine work that appears, only to vanish, day after day, Sunday after Sunday, in our lives.

I am indebted to the artists who illustrated my work for EC. I am happy to have their work collected in two books now by Ballantine. I no longer have to sneak around in the shadows with them, fearful of the criticism of the snobs. We have come out in the light, all of us. And the sun feels good, doesn't it, fellows.

Again, thanks Jerry. Your SQUA TRONT IS absolutely handsome. I particularly was happy to find the TIGA-Frazetta pages...very well done. I wish Frazetta could do more for all of us in the coming years. Enjoyed the Williamson portfolio and cover, also. My heartiest congratulations.

Yours,

Ray Bradbury



BILL GAINES.....

E.C. was proudest of its science-fiction comics. And we were probably the least proud of our horror comics...although I don't mean by that that we weren't very proud of them anyway! It was just that the s-f comics were kind of special. As you might expect, when it came to the dollars and cents end of things, just the opposite was true. We made the most money from our horror titles, and lost quite a bit on the s-f. In fact, the highly successful horror titles supported the s-f and Kurtzman war titles, while Crime and Shock were both moderately successful. We just wanted to keep our s-f going, and did to the very end. The two titles were eventually merged into one to cut our losses in half, and the title was finally changed to "Incredible S-F," because the Code Authority wouldn't allow the word "Weird"...but the very last comic ever published by E.C. was Incredible No. 33. (The final story in the issue was to have been a mutant story illustrated by Torres. The Code rejected it, so we substituted one of our favorites, "Judgment Day." The Code rejected that story also, because they were offended by the beads of perspiration on the man's face. So help me! I threatened court action - and they finally relented. After a most trying year with them, I was so happy to have won just one point!)

Al and I enjoyed writing the s-f most. I guess we felt more intellectually stimulated, and we believed we were reaching an older and more intelligent group of readers with them. We turned out our stories at a fantastic rate in those days...Al and I plotted, and Al wrote, four stories a week. The fifth day was for the letters page and odds and ends. (Kurtzman worked alone, and only wrote three or four stories a month - but his were very heavily researched. Craig was slow - he wrote and drew an average of one story per month, along with a couple of covers.)

My favorite s-f cover artist was Al Feldstein, and every year or so I thumb through all the old issues and enjoy the covers. My favorite inside artists were Wood, Williamson, and Orlando of course.

Ah - those were the days - and although I'm a lot richer now (and I'm not knocking that!), I have to confess, cliche as it must sound, that I was happier in my work back with the old "four-color for a dime" magazines.

LARRY STARK.....

WEIRD SCIENCE was the first EC title I ever remember noticing, and I noticed it for the very reason that I continued to like this group of comics more than any other before, since, or during their existence: the stories were well-written.

That is what I remember best about them, because at the time I was trying to write myself. I had become aware of radio as a dramatic medium (Radio, in its death-agonies just after 1950, produced much memorable work, and we didn't get our t-v till the summer of '52); when my own creative imagination failed me, I began adapting stories from science-fiction magazines, and EC comics, into radio-scripts. When I began writing appreciations, and turned into the "House Critic" for EC out of over-enthusiasm, it was the stories, and the writing, and not often the art-work, that claimed most of my attention.

Stories in EC magazines, especially Feldstein's stories, and especially those in the science-fiction mags, were never thinly sketched outlines; each panel was packed with thorough reading-material that contributed to a total picture, and Al often did a great deal more work than any other comic writer would think of doing. I remember a very long "documentary style" piece that parallelled a series of disastrous air-crashes at Newark Airport with saucer-sightings, and concluded that aliens were attempting to discourage Earthmen from developments in air travel. The story worked largely because of the weight of the sheer mass of words. Anyone else would have told the same story in one third the words...and ruined it.

For quite a while, E. C. stole stories rather shamelessly, adapting ideas from science-fiction collections to comic stories. I can remember being flattered when I was told I had recognized the sources for 90% of them. But this ultimately resulted in the fruitful and very open cooperation of Ray Bradbury, whose impressionistic style fitted very well the talents of the EC artists.

But I don't mean to imply that EC was Holy Writ that never faltered. There were standard house-plots....like Earthmen finding themselves playing the role of aphids in the salad, or of tape-worms, on other planets. There was the poor art-work of Jack Kamen, and the atrocious art-work of Feldstein, to contend with. And, when EC came up with a silly, predictable plot, and pushed the adjectives to make it look as though they were trying hard, the result was even more embarrassing than the usual hack-job that, say, Stan Lee was turning out. Still, as they answered whenever I complained too loudly, the boys were tired. Feldstein, at the height of his career, was writing a complete comic-story every day, five days a week, with no time off. The wonder is not that he turned in some tired work occasionally, but that he did so very much GOOD work on such a schedule... and that he chose to write stories fully, instead of saving the time. As Resident Critic, I tended to push for excellence, and was probably much harsher than I should have been with the clinkers.

But, frankly, with EC, the clinkers really offended me. I remember a great, carefully built script in which Earth is painted as prison, on which the refuse of the universe torture one another. The prisoner they are delivering, complete with an improvised memory, is Adolph Hitler. I remember a story in which a fat group of college professors sit around Thanksgiving dinner discussing frequent and unexplained drops in total population...only to be "plucked" by aliens in the end. I remember a time-traveller who tried to prevent Lincoln's assassination. I remember a story in which, although immortality was available to all, people who were bored reported to a suicide-bureau...and instead of dying, were sent as pioneers to the planets. All these led me to expect miracles out of Feldstein and his crew of illustrators, and when their performance was merely adequate, I felt cheated.

But by about the time of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY, everybody was very tired, and when INCREDIBLE arrived there was very little vitality left. Not only was the Code inhibiting creativity, and sapping energy by asking for irrational changes; the "comic boom" was really over. The industry was always prey to such cyclic movements, and this one had run its course. With the economic structure shaky, the Code devaluing creativity, and several years of exhaustion catching up with everyone, the will to excellence that made them dominant in the field just wasn't there any more.

INCREDIBLE was an embarrassment to everyone, and it was a relief when it died. Besides, those of you who had collected ECs still had a brilliant harvest. And those of us who had given our collections away still have our memories.

Cheers,

Larry

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC

e.c.'s DEATH:

EDITOR'S COMMENT:

The following article was written aboard the U.S.S. JAMESTOWN in February and March of 1969 by Roger Hill. Roger is not one of the original E.C. collectors....he did not buy them off the stands. However, from the first time he discovered they existed, there was no cessation in the collecting of E.C. until his collection was complete. Every copy is mint; all the club material has been found; E.C. original art has been discovered - and at the least, his loyalties have been bound firm to the E.C. Comic Book Line. This article was written with much research material and in the spare time that Roger found aboard the JAMESTOWN. Be forewarned - he is not trying to intellectualize with you - he simply writes what his feelings are and the reasons for those feelings.

When I first received Roger's article, I thought about editing some of it out. Then I decided to leave it as is - for what each of you are about to read is the immediate reaction of almost every fan to Wertham and Censorship. This reaction is a defense against an outside agent that is seeking to destroy (and let's face it - has, in E.C.'s case) that which the fan holds dear - the right of both publisher and editor, along with the artist, to express themselves completely.

This is the aspect of Censorship that abhors most people. Why? To study anything so involved, one should concern himself with the motivating force behind the movement. What is censorship? What is a censure? For what purpose is it brought about? Webster Collegiate defines censor as: "2. One who acts as an overseer of morals and conduct; esp.: a. An official empowered to examine written or printed matter, motion pictures, etc., in order to forbid publication if objectionable. 3. Psychoanalysis. The force or agency that excludes from consciousness unacceptable memories or complexes." The World Book Encyclopedia: "Censorship is an effort by a government or private organization to keep people from reading, hearing, or seeing whatever they please. It is most often applied to speeches, printed material, plays, and motion pictures that might be dangerous to the government or harmful to public morals."

Now we know a small portion of the origin and explained purpose of censorship. We know what it was like in Germany in the years of 1937-45. We know how it has developed in Russia today. We know how it has developed in the United States. But do we know why it developed? I must confess, I do not have all the answers - but I do know this. The answers do not lie with the extreme right or left; the right being best personified with Fredric Wertham; the left by the overinflamed comic book fan.

To seek the answer to something one does not fully understand, one should never take the word of one source or person. The feeling that has been developed and arrived at for the present within myself, in relation to censorship specifically concerned with the comics, is this. Even though our dictionaries and encyclopedias tell us that the censor is equally after the arts as well as the media, we know as hard fact that the media, in America, is the party that suffers. Why? It is my firm belief that any media, no matter how far removed, reflects the society to which it is geared. The media is always dependent upon the approval of the society. Every movie director, magazine publisher, commercial writer, or newspaper editor will tell you that his job is to present something that the public will consume. Regrettably, this is the truth. Case in point...PLAYBOY had a recent interview with Lee Marvin in which Marvin discussed violence in the celluloid media. PLAYBOY brought up the fact that many citizens' organizations were once again becoming aroused by all the violence in the movies. Marvin was asked if he thought there was any connection between violence on the screen and real violence. Marvin commented that if the violence in the film was realistic enough, it would act as a deterrent. If a person realized just how harmful real fist fighting and gun shooting is, he would be

reluctant to do it himself. PLAYBOY also questioned Marvin about the possibility that America is a sick nation and violence has contributed much to the sickness. He replied that, in the media, the mood of sickness is in the audience; that the film maker is only reflecting the ethos of the society; and that if the audience responded to it - then you knew where the sickness was.

The media reflects the society...and that reflection, when looked upon, must be rejected by most Americans. For the truth is that we, as a nation, condone certain types of violence as right and other types of violent action as wrong. LOOK, June 10, 1969, reports "VIOLENCE: WE CAN END IT." Quotes from this article...."Americans live in a society that values the use of force." "A society that condemns some forms of killing but encourages others - war, capital punishment and other collectively sanctioned eye-for-an-eye behavior - is breeding deadly confusion." "In American culture, where achievement, self-reliance and individual self-interest are valued highly, we also find a relatively high emphasis on military glory, a relatively high incidence of personal crime, and a society characterized by a relatively high degree of bellicosity." What did LOOK offer as a solution? Ironically, the first point made is what many people have been screaming for years, only to be ignored - "Parents can begin by changing the example they offer their children."

SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT, Fredric Wertham, M.D., - "the influence of comic books on today's youth." The following is from the last three pages of Mr. Wertham's book.

> One evening at the Lafargue Clinic, a young woman came to see me. She was the mother of a boy who after some delinquency had been referred to the Clinic and been treated there. She told me that the boy had got into trouble again, this time picked up with a switchblade knife. I remembered her as a hardworking woman who had given the best care and education to her children that she could. She was very distressed and I tried to console her. "I know your boy," I said to her, "and the Clinic will take full responsibility for him again." She thanked me and went out.
>
> About an hour later when the Clinic was closed, I left the office. Walking through one of the corridors of the building, I saw out of the corner of my eye a woman sitting on a bench crying. I recognized the mother I had spoken to. It was late, and I was tired, but I went over to her and took her back to the office.
>
> By that time she had managed to control her sobbing, but she could not talk. So I consoled her again and told her we would do whatever we could. Then I added, "I know what you have done for this boy. Don't think that it's your fault." (I would ask you to note that this is what thousands of American mothers wanted to hear. - Ed.) At that she looked up, all alert. "It must be my fault," she said. "I heard that in the lectures. And the judge said it, too. It's the parents' fault that the children do something wrong. Maybe when he was very young....."
>
> "Not at all," I interrupted her. "You have done all that you could. I have the whole chart here and we know it from the boy himself. You are a good mother, and you've given this boy a good home. But the influences children are exposed to - the comic books, the crime programs and all that. Adult influences work against them. We have studied that, and know good parents when we see them. So don't worry about yourself. It's not your fault."
>
> She seemed to come out from under a cloud. She thanked me and got up to go. When she was halfway through the doorway she turned slowly. "Doctor," she said in a low voice, "I'm sorry to take your time. But please --- tell me again."
>
> I looked at her questioningly.
>
> "Tell me again," she said slowly and hesitantly. "Tell me again that it isn't my fault."
>
> And I did.

Senator of Tennessee, 1956
Estes Kefauver

THE DEATH OF E.C.

By Roger Hill

"Cleaning up the Comic Books," "New Czar elected to Clean Up the Comics," "New Code Passed to Clean Up the Dirty Books," "Will the Comics Code Work?" These were just a few of the headlines spread across the columns of newspapers throughout America around 1955-56. Attacks on the comics started as far back as 1940, but it took until 1951 to really get the ball rolling. What qualified persons or groups participated in this adventure? Well, let's see. Congressmen - not having the brains or gumption to speak out on any major issues or crises of the world. The type that knew they were doing a poor job in the house of government, yet needed to accomplish something in the eyes of the public to insure future positions in Congress. Of course, there were also the 16,000 womens' club organizations and PTA committees throughout the land.

I will say there were those who were sincere in their beliefs and disapproval of the comics...I respect their sincerity, but I certainly don't agree with their opinions. For those who didn't know or care what was happening, yet followed the crowd simply because "her friend Mable" did, I have nothing but the highest degree of contempt. Yes, these were the sweethearts of America. Heh, heh! Last, but certainly the lowest, there was an erratic psychiatrist - your foe and mine - Dr. Fredric Wertham. These were the three main contributors to the passing of the Comics Code in 1954. Can there be an answer given for the newspaper heading which reads, "Will the Comics Code Work?" That can easily be answered - YES. It definitely worked, all right. There's no doubt the Code cleaned up the comics. But that's just about all it accomplished. Has it helped any with the crime rate? NO! It has not and never will. The crime rate within the last ten years has risen so high in such a short period of time, it is unbelievable...but very true. There isn't much anybody can do about it either. The law enforcers slow it down, but that's about it.

Dr. Wertham's book, SEDUCTION OF THE INNOCENT, published in 1954, would, I suppose, to any average unsuspecting reader, turn the reader against the comics. This being due to the many cases, examples and incidents which old Doc has brought out in his book. But this is only one man's (and a few of his colleagues') opinion. This does not represent the opinion of the vast majority of psychiatrists and child experts! A person delving deeper into the subject would soon learn that many psychiatrists believe that comics "serve as a release for childrens' agressive tendencies, and that delinquent children are usually predisposed to delinquency or are unstable in the first place." When I was in high school, I learned that any person, animal, or living organism acts and lives appropriately to the environment in which it lives. Practically any psychiatrist will agree with this statement. A good example of this was when Dr. Wertham was interviewed on the Alan Burke TV show in New York City. The Doc was saying that comics actually taught juveniles how to fight and use their fists, when a little Negro girl from New York City, about eight years old, stood up and said, "Dat ain't so, Doctor. I's learned how to fight on the streets of New York." This resulted in uproarious laughter from the audience. Wertham laughed it off, of course. I feel the only thing Dr. Wertham ever proved was that pre-teen and teen-age delinquents do read comics.

The first investigations to be held on the comics industry was by the General Federation of Womens' Clubs in 1946. This pressure forced the formulation of a code which was headed by the comic book publishers themselves. This code was considered to be too poorly enforced to stem the tide of bad pictorial fiction. Continued public pressure, stimulated by the Womens' Clubs, caused many state governments to assign joint legislative committees to look into the comic book situation. As a reference of exactly what these committees accomplished and proved, I will use the report made to the New York State Joint Legislative Committee to Study the Publications of Comics.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To The Legislature of the State of New York:

Pursuant to the direction of a Joint Resolution of the Senate and Assembly, adopted on the 29th day of March 1949, the Joint Legislative Committee to Study the Publication of Comics hereby respectfully submits this report.

Joseph F. Carlino, Chairman

DATED: March 15, 1951

RESOLUTION CREATING COMMITTEE

Whereas, widespread public discussion has been occasioned on the subject of publications, commonly known and referred to as comic books.

FINDINGS

From its studies from the testimony of experts and from its painstaking examination of all of the factors involved, the Committee finds:

1. A substantial majority of the publishers of so-called comics are responsible, intelligent and right thinking citizens with a will to improve their industry.
2. A small, stubborn, willful, irresponsible minority of publishers of so-called "comics" whose brazen disregard for anything but their profit, who recognize no duty to anyone and whose sole objective is financial gain without thought of the consequences of their depredations, are responsible for the bad reputation of the publishers of all comics.
3. The entire industry is remiss in its failure to institute effective measures to police and restrain the undesirable minority.
4. So-called "comics" are a most effective medium for the dissemination of ideas and when such a medium is used to disseminate bad ideas which may leave deep impressions on the keen, absorptive minds of children, the unrestricted publication and distribution of "comics" becomes a matter of grave public concern.
5. "Comics" which depict crime, brutality, horror, and which produce race hatred impair the ethical development of children, describe how to make weapons and how to inflict injuries with these weapons, and how to commit crimes, have a wide circulation among children.
6. The reading of crime "comics" stimulate sadistic and masochistic attitudes and interfere with the normal development of sexual habits in children and produce abnormal sexual tendencies in adolescents.
7. Crime "comics" are a contributing factor leading to juvenile delinquency.
8. Instead of reforming their bad practices, the publishers of bad crime "comics" have banded together, employed resourceful legal and public relations counsel, so-called "educators," and experts in a deliberate effort to continue such harmful practices and to fight any and every effort to arrest or control such practices.

9. The Committee condemns the attempts of the representatives of crime "comics" and civic and religious groups who have organized to protect youths from the evil effects of crime "comics."
10. The evidence adduced makes some action by the State imperative to protect its children.

These were the findings of this committee. The report also pointed out that two previous bills had been introduced to the State Legislature in 1949. Also included in the report was a visual proof section where excerpts of the "comics" were printed. One bill had been passed by both houses and transmitted to the governor. The bill proposed to amend Section 1141 of the Penal Law which makes it a crime to publish certain matters. The amendment sought to ban printed material "devoted to the publication and principally made up acts of, or pictures depicting, sordid bloodshed, lust or henious acts." The governor veoted the bill, as an unlawful infringement upon the right of freedom of the press.

The other bill was seeking to establish a comic book review division in the Education Department. The bill would also provide for the appointment of a Review Director who would have the responsibility of licensing each comic book publication along similar lines to those followed in licensing motion pictures. This bill passed the State Senate, but failed to obtain favorable consideration by the Committee in the Assembly. As I stated before, this report applies only to the State of New York, but many other states were making the same investigations by their local legislature.

To make a long story short, the Committee recommended that a reasonable opportunity be afforded the publishers of comic books to clean house. If that failed to materialize, the Committee was prepared to recommend regulatory measures.

The final recommendation of this report was that the Committee be extended to the 1952 Legislative Session and be broadened to include a stury of radio, television and motion picture programs, as well as comic books and pocket edition novels, and that the Committee evaluate the efforts of the industry in providing self-regulation. Since these recommendations of self-censorship weren't followed through by the publishers to any great extent, and due to increased pressure from the General Federation of Womens' Clubs and PTA organizations, the United States Senate decided to step into the picture. The hearing and investigations which began in late April of 1954 were held at the United States Court House in New York City (the comic-book capital which at the time were producing the majority of the country's monthly output of 90 million books). A Newsweek Magazine, dated May 3, 1954, stated that within the first week of hearings, the Senate Sub-committee had collected some pretty frightening comic book literature....all of it having a heavy accent on sex and murder. The article goes on to say that some of our most hardened investigators were revolted by what they found.

Quick rebuttal came from the self-acknowledged originator of the horror magazine, William M. Gaines, President of Entertaining Comics Groups. "I am proud of the comics I publish," he said. "Some may not like them. That's a matter of personal taste. My only limits are the bounds of good taste...." At that, Democratic Senator Estes Kefauver of Tennessee, the leading committee member, held aloft an Entertaining Comic magazine....on its cover a man holding a bloody ax in one hand and a woman's head in the other (Crime Suspense, No. 22). "Is this good taste?" asked the Senator. "Yes - for the cover of a horror comic," replied Gaines. "I think it would be bad taste if he were holding the head a little higher so the neck would show with the blood dripping from it." Monroe Froelich, Jr., the business manager of Marvel Comic Book Co. (who at that time had a monthly sales of 10 million

copies), argues that his company "cannot change the reading taste of the public," For example, he said when his firm published "Bible Tales" in comic book format, with the Yale Divinity School's guidance, they lost $29,000.

Bill Gaines had also delved into this field with his "Picture Stories from the Bible, Science, and History," and had also lost money. Mr. Gaines finally summed up his views on juvenile deliquency, with which I heartily agree.... "The truth is that deliquency is a product of real environment in which a child lives - and not of the fiction he reads."

In the opposite corner from Gaines sat Dr. Wertham, New York psychiatrist, and for twenty years senior psychiatrist of the Department of Hospitals in New York City. Dr. Wertham offered one case history after another to refute the claim that children do not imitate what they see in the magazines. "A boy of 6," he said, "wrapped himself in an old sheet and jumped from a rafter. He said he saw that in a comic book." To the contention that comics are the "folklore of today," Wertham retorted that they are just the opposite. "They are not poetic, not literary, have no relationship to any art. They do not express the genuine conflicts and aspirations of the people." STOP! Stop right there, Doc. Can this man be serious? Is he putting us on? Let's go back here for a minute. He states that "Comic books are not poetic," and I draw your attention to just a few examples that Mr. Wertham has undoubtedly accidently missed. "Charge of the Light Brigade" (Frontline Combat #4), "Casey at the Bat" (Mad #2), "Face Upon the Floor" (Mad #10) -- is this not poetry? He says comics are not literary. Look at most of the Frontline Combat and Two Fisted Tales stories. Most were based on actual facts out of history books. The man then claims, "comics have no relationship to any art." He's trying to tell us that Frank Frazetta, Wally Wood, Al Williamson, Jack Davis, Reed Crandall, and many, many other fine artists of the past and present - too numerous to mention here - are lacking in art talent? Plus, after all that, he has the utter gall to state that "Comic books do not express the genuine conflicts and aspirations of the people." Are comics about war not genuine conflicts of this nation? Or what about racial prejudice? Tell me, Doc! If that isn't a genuine conflict of the people, I'd like to know what the hell is! E.C., for one, brought out and featured stories dealing with both these problems. They presented them in such a way as to make people more aware of the sorrow and tragedy involved with these two subjects. I believe history will record that the comics, in truth, reflected very much the conflicts of the American people at this time.

Other testimony was heard from Mrs. Helen Meyers, Vice President of the Dell Publishing Company, the country's largest producer of comics at the time. She defended (as she put it) the responsible comic book publishers. Walt Disney's comics were the leading magazines in nationwide newsstand sales during the first six months of 1953, and Mr. Disney was quick to defend the level of juvenile taste. When interviewed by Newsweek Magazine, he said, "It does seem a bizarre case of guilt by association that the whole comics field should be condemned. The biggest magazines in the field feature wholesome characters. Nobody can convince me that Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck are monsters."

During the hearings, the investigations were played up big by the majority of the magazines and newspapers, and most of them supported banning the so-called "dirty books" from the stands. As a result of the investigations, a new organization was formed -- the Comics Magazine Association of America, Inc. - and on October 26, 1954, its president, John Goldwater, announced the adoption of a new code of ethics aimed at cleaning up the comics. The Association pooled an annual budget of $100,000 for self-regulation and named as their code administrator a New York lawyer, Charles F. Murphy. The code expressly forbid (and still does) scenes of excessive gunplay, physical agony, gory or gruesome crimes, seduction, rape and perversion. Although some people might think it so, the Comics Code is not a government run organization. It is merely a corporation set up by all of the pub-

lishing firms and various engraving companies and printing houses and distributing agencies. This code was actually formed by the comic publishers themselves, as a result of the investigations and hearings in 1954. It was either strict self-censorship or the alternative of facing legislative action. However, many states have gone ahead and passed legislation concerning comics.

Yes, the good old crime, horror, and science fiction comics are gone...shot down in their prime by people who just couldn't - or wouldn't understand them. All that remain now are the yellowing copies treasured by collectors throughout fandom, and even those copies will perish in time. Yes, I give you my congratulations, Dr. Wertham, and your colleagues of the PTA organizations. You certainly got what you wanted. But a word of warning, Doc. I wouldn't try pushing the comics around anymore, because next time, fandom will be ready to back up the comic books and their editors and publishers 100%. And besides, Dr., you are getting old! I quote from the February 1957 issue of Readers Digest, from an article entitled "Progress in Cleaning up the Comics" by T.E. Murphy: "The same people who made and sold bad comics are still around, chafing for the good old days when they made so much money." Well, folks...the fans are chafing right along with them.

Wide World

New York Comic Book Czar

Judge Charles F. Murphy, code administrator for the newly formed Comics Magazine Association of America Inc., New York, shows how the association has removed some of the horror characteristics from one panel of a comic strip. The association was set up by the comic-book industry, after much public criticism of some comics, to impose on itself a measure of "self-regulation." One of the articles in this series will refer to the association in more detail.

end.

GEORGE EVANS*

George Evans has long been popular with E.C. fans. His early comic book work can be found in PLANET COMICS, where he did "The Lost World" consecutively for some time in the years 1949 and early 1950. The year 1951 found George doing work for CAPTAIN VIDEO, where there was much interior work, but photographic covers - not lending the artist an opportunity to apply his talent - on the outside of the comic. CAPTAIN VIDEO was a Fawcett Publication and, from this title, George moved into the Fawcett War and Horror titles. WORLDS OF FEAR #3 contained an excellent 13-page story. THIS MAGAZINE IS HAUNTED #2 held 13 more pages by George. THIS MAGAZINE IS HAUNTED #5 featured "The Slithering Horror of Skontong Swamp" where George did some superb graphic work. STRANGE SUSPENSE STORIES #4 presented one of Mr. Evans' first covers (which actually was just a blow-up of the splash panel of George's inside story). The story inside was truly unique and hinted at the possibility that George Evans belonged somewhere else. Around this period, George did move on ..... to E.C., in fact!!

Upon arrival with E.C., George was immediately ushered into doing work for the Crime and Horror books, with occasional stories for the War titles. The response to his work was positive, and he became a permanent member of the E.C. staff. Soon George made it evident what subject matter he enjoyed working on most -- aeronautical stories!! Some of the first professional jobs that George has done was for Aeronautical Magazines, and he still held the airplane close to his heart, or should one say - - brush. When the New Trend folded and the New, New Trend was ushered in, George took a more important role with E.C. He was writing most of the stories for ACES HIGH, accounting for the cover work, and doing interior stories. Evans was finally working in an area that interested him intensely, and the work showed it. After the New, New Trend came the Picto-Fictions, and George was still at E.C. However, with the demise of E.C., the artist once again found himself free-lancing.

There is work with CLASSICS COMICS, and DELL that accounts for much of George's time after E.C. One DELL COMIC in particular shows an abundance of interesting Evans work, THE FROGMEN.

The following work, "The Flying Swifts" is some of George's best. It is extremely well done because this was originally an idea that George conceived in Sunday Strip form, and hoped to sell to the syndicate. It is about a specific period in aeronautical history that George is especially interested in - the early experimental aircraft. The panels are presented in a format that does not come near to the original layout, yet we hope that you obtain as much enjoyment out of the artwork as we did on first beholding it ourselves.

"The Flying Swifts" Copyright 1969 C by George Evans

The FLYING Swifts

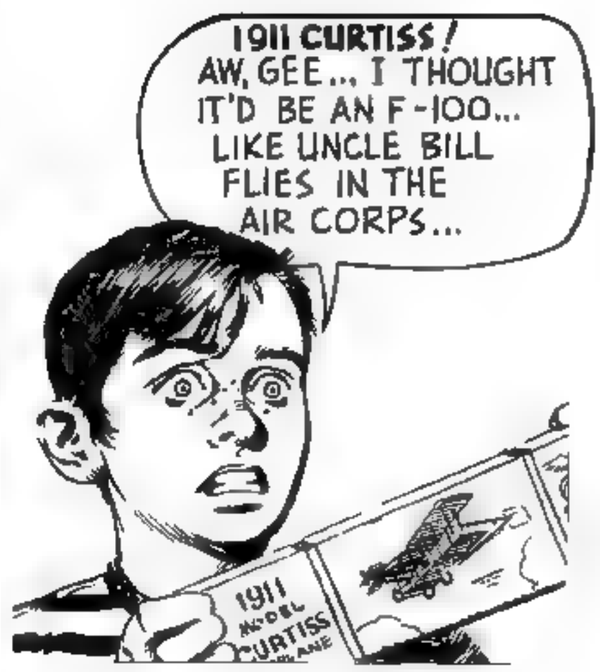
A story of **PEOPLE**, *with an* *aeronautical* *setting.*

by

GEORGE EVANS

HI, DAD! DID YOU BRING ME THAT MODEL AIRPLANE KIT YOU PROMISED ME? DID YOU, HUH?

RIGHT HERE, JIMMY! I HOPE YOU LIKE IT!
OH, SURE I WILL, DAD! THANKS! I... I...


1911 CURTISS! AW, GEE... I THOUGHT IT'D BE AN F-100... LIKE UNCLE BILL FLIES IN THE AIR CORPS...
1911 MODEL CURTISS

THAT'S THE KIND YOUR GRANDPA BILL FIRST FLEW!
SURE, SURE, DAD! BUT THERE WASN'T ANYTHING EXCITING ABOUT THAT...!

NOTHING EXCITING! IF GRANDPA EVER HEARS YOU SAY THAT, HE'LL GENERATE ENOUGH STEAM TO HEAT THE HOUSE ALL WINTER! LOOK...

THIS'S A SORT OF HISTORY OF THE FLYING SWIFTS. MAYBE IT'LL CHANGE YOUR MIND ABOUT WHAT'S EXCITING!
HOLY SMOKE! IS THAT GRANDPA?

THAT'S GRANDPA! WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR THE WHOLE STORY?

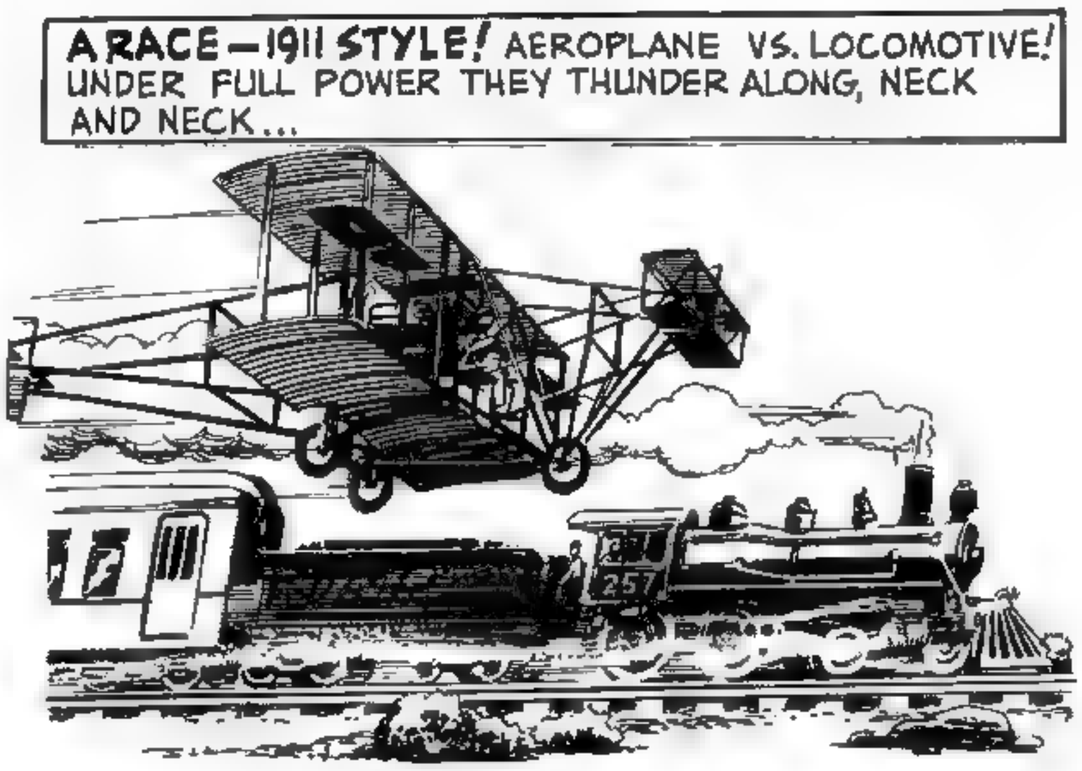
WOULD I? I SURE WOULD!!
WELL...IT BEGAN LIKE THIS...

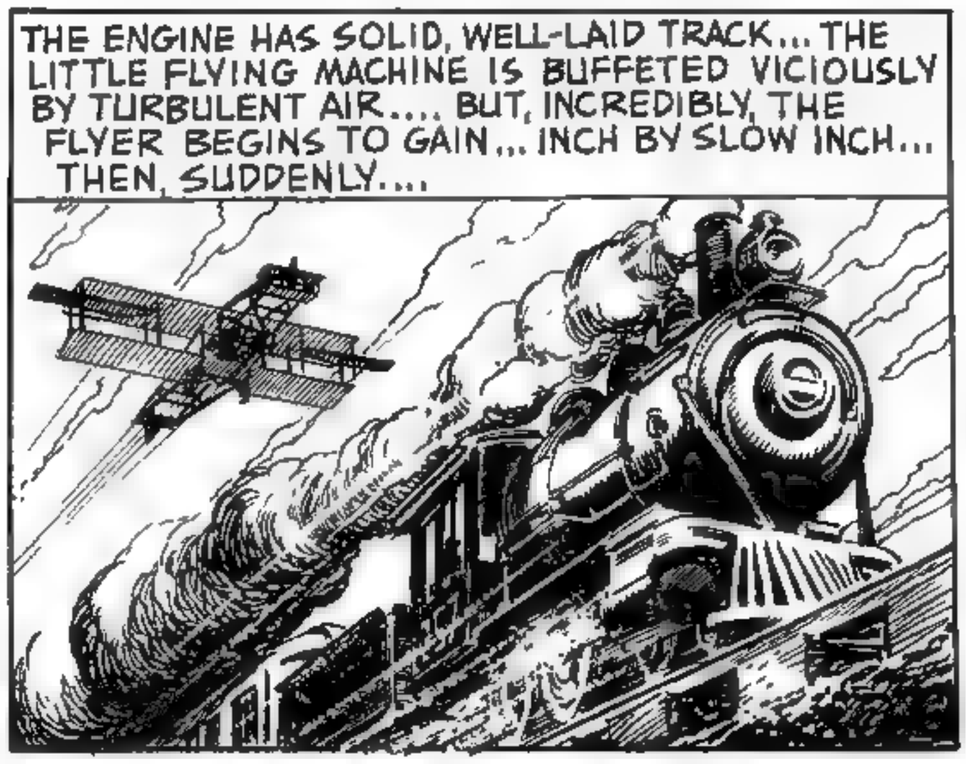
GEE, DAD... DID GRANDPA REALLY FLY AN OL' CRATE LIKE THIS?
YES, HE REALLY DID JIMMY! IT'S QUITE A STORY, TOO BEGAN 'WAY BACK IN 1911...

LISTEN!

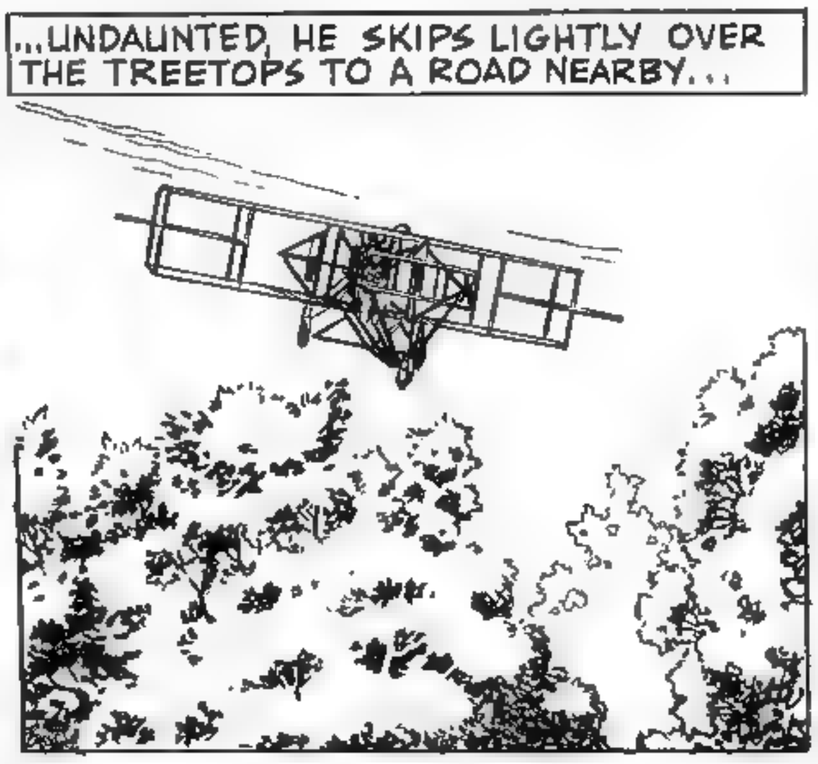
I KNEW IT! HERE'S THAT FOOL SWIFT KID AGAIN! GET ON THE SHOVEL, TOM!
YEP... GUESS HE NEVER WILL GIVE UP... SO, WE'LL SHOW 'IM AGAIN, NO OL' BOXKITE CAN BEAT OUR BESSIE!

AW.... THEY'VE SEEN US AGAIN! IF ONLY WE COULD'VE GOT A LITTLE LEAD!.... WELL— WE'LL GIVE IT OUR BEST! HERE GOES....

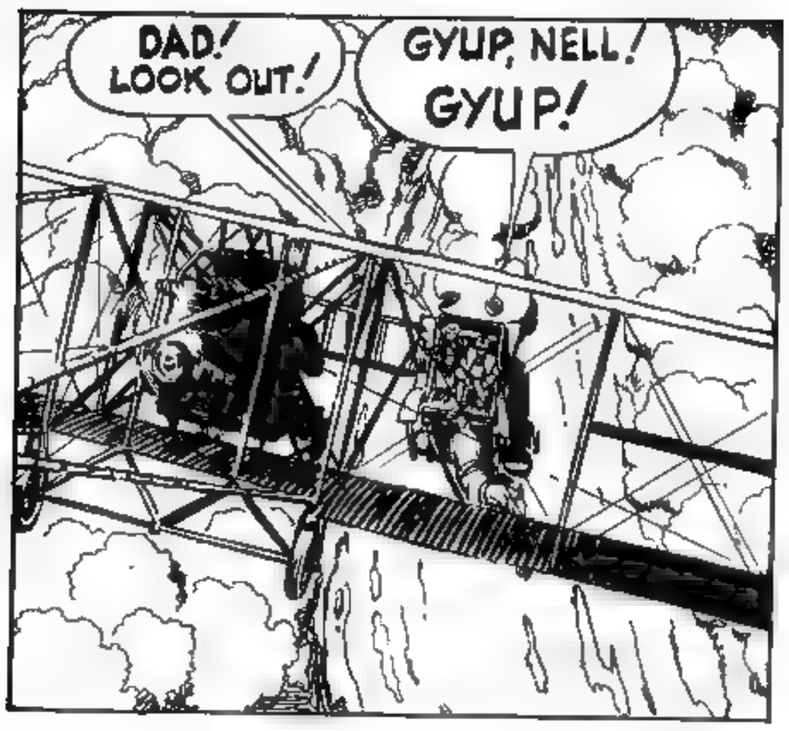

A RACE—1911 STYLE! AEROPLANE VS. LOCOMOTIVE! UNDER FULL POWER THEY THUNDER ALONG, NECK AND NECK...


THE ENGINE HAS SOLID, WELL-LAID TRACK... THE LITTLE FLYING MACHINE IS BUFFETED VICIOUSLY BY TURBULENT AIR.... BUT, INCREDIBLY, THE FLYER BEGINS TO GAIN... INCH BY SLOW INCH... THEN, SUDDENLY....

SILENCE! ONLY THE WIND KEENING IN STRUTS AND WIRES! THE FLYER'S MOTOR IS DEAD... A HUNDRED FEET UP!


...UNDAUNTED, HE SKIPS LIGHTLY OVER THE TREETOPS TO A ROAD NEARBY...

...BUT... THE ROAD IS OCCUPIED!
DAD! LOOK OUT!


DAD! LOOK OUT!
GYUP, NELL! GYUP!

YI! THAT'S THE PRESNALL RIG! WHAT A WAY TO MEET THE BOSS!

NANCY! MR. PRESNALL! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

BILLY!!
SO, SWIFT!...YOU SPEND YOUR SUNDAYS TRYING TO SCARE DECENT PEOPLE TO DEATH, EH?
NO SIR!.. NO SIR! MY...MY MOTOR FAILED!

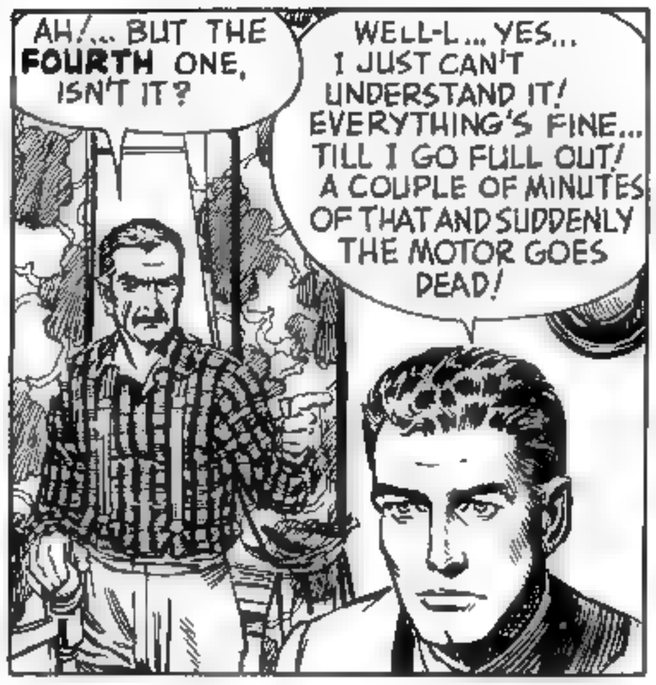
AH_SO? WELL, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET IT IN GOOD SHAPE, NOW THAT YOU'LL HAVE MORE FREE TIME!
FREE TIME, SIR?

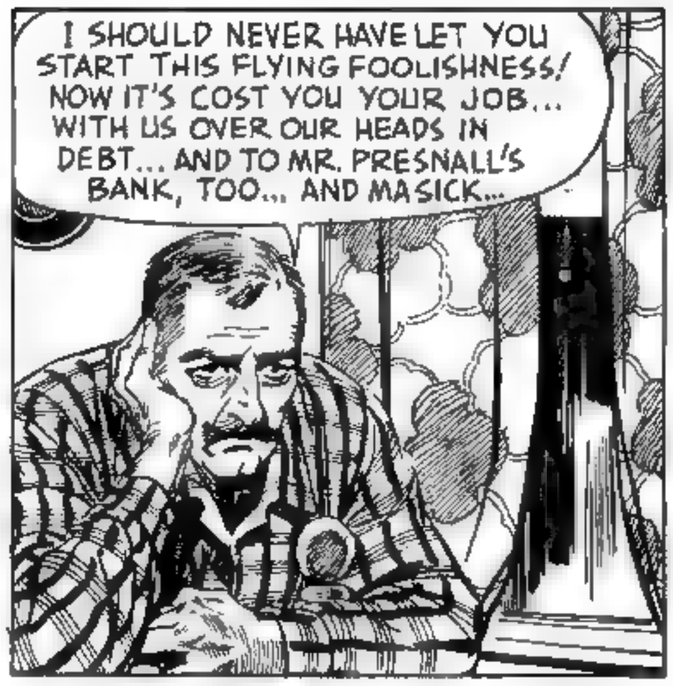
YES—FREE TIME, SWIFT! YOU'RE FIRED! AS OF NOW!
OH, DAD! NO!
FIRED...? BUT... WHY?

WHY? WHY? DO YOU THINK I'LL CONTINUE TO EMPLOY A FEATHER-BRAINED FOOL WHO'S ALMOST KILLED MY DAUGHTER AND MYSELF? YOU...YOU... YOU... AERO-NUT!
BUT MR. PRESNALL...I DIDN'T TRY TO HARM YOU! IT WAS SHEER ACCIDENT!
OH, DAD... I'M SURE IT WAS!

BE QUIET, NANCY! ANY FOOL WHO THINKS HE SHOULD FLY, LIKE... LIKE... LIKE AN INSECT!... IS NOT SUITED TO THE BANKING BUSINESS!
OH, BILLY... BILLY... I'M SO SORRY..!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, NANCY.
...BUT WAIT TILL DAD HEARS ABOUT THIS..!
EVANS

...SO MR PRESNALL FIRED YOU?!
DO YOU BLAME HIM, MOTHER? A FOOL STUNT LIKE THAT!
DAD! I TOLD YOU IT WAS AN ACCIDENT!


AH!... BUT THE **FOURTH** ONE, ISN'T IT?
WELL-L... YES... I JUST CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! EVERYTHING'S FINE... TILL I GO FULL OUT! A COUPLE OF MINUTES OF THAT AND SUDDENLY THE MOTOR GOES DEAD!


I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LET YOU START THIS FLYING FOOLISHNESS! NOW IT'S COST YOU YOUR JOB... WITH US OVER OUR HEADS IN DEBT... AND TO MR. PRESNALL'S BANK, TOO... AND MASICK...

I KNOW, DAD! BUT DON'T WORRY... RUSS COXEY'LL TAKE ME ON AT HIS REPAIR SHOP.
HE GETS A FEW AUTOMOBILES TO SERVICE, NOW. MAYBE WORKING ON THEM I'LL FIGURE OUT WHAT GOES WRONG...
...WITH THAT FLYING MACHINE?

NO, BILLY! YOU LET THAT FOOL THING ALONE, NOW! YOU HEAR?
YES, SIR... I HEAR...!
... BUT I WON'T PROMISE THAT, DAD! I HAVE FAITH IN MY MACHINE--AND SOME DAY SOON IT MAY PAY OFF ALL OUR BILLS!

LATER
HELLO, NANCY... STILL MAD AT ME?
OH, BILLY, BILLY— I **NEVER** WAS! BUT DAD... OH...
NANCY!

... AND NEXT DAY FINDS BILL SWIFT, WOULD-BE FLYER, EX-BANK CLERK, ELBOW-DEEP IN GREASE AT RUSS COXEY'S SMITHING AND REPAIR SHOP...
...SORRY I CAN'T PAY YOU AS MUCH AS THE BANK DID, BILL, BUT NOW THAT YOU'VE PUT IN A DAY, HOW DO YOU LIKE THE WORK?
FINE, RUSS! IT'S A CHANCE TO LEARN... AND AUTOS AND AEROPLANES ARE GOING TO BE COMMON THINGS, SOMEDAY!
Ford

I DOUBT IT! TOO CANTANKEROUS! COME ON... I'LL DRIVE YOU HOME!
NO, THANKS, RUSS! I HAD A DATE WITH NANCY.. IF IT'S STILL ON!

NANCY! WHO'S THERE?

IT'S... IT'S BILLY SWIFT, DADDY...

AH! THE UNEMPLOYED AERONAUT! I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D HAVE THE NERVE TO COME BACK HERE TILL YOU'D AT LEAST GOT A JOB!

OH, I'VE GOT A JOB, SIR! AT COXEY'S SMITHING AND REPAIR SHOP!

DO YOU THINK I'LL HAVE MY DAUGHTER SEEING A... A... A MECHANIC ?!!

THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH BEING A MECHANIC, SIR! IT'S HONEST WORK — AND SKILLED, TOO!

BAH! NOW YOU LISTEN, SWIFT! YOU COULD BE JAILED FOR TRYING TO LAND THAT INFERNAL MACHINE ON TOP OF US, BUT I'M NOT A BAD SORT! YOU PROMISE TO STOP THAT **FLYING** NONSENSE AND I'LL EVEN GIVE YOU BACK YOUR OLD JOB!

NO, THANKS, MR PRESNALL! AIR SHOWS, AIR RACES, ARE STARTING UP EVERYWHERE, NOW! SOMEDAY SOON I'LL BE IN 'EM, TOO! LOOK... LET ME TAKE YOU UP FOR A RIDE!?!

WHAT? ME — FLY! HA,HA!! YOU'VE LOST YOUR MARBLES, SWIFT!

NO, SIR! THE WRIGHTS HAVE BEEN FLYING PASSENGERS FOR YEARS!

THEY HAVE? HMMM..... IS IT... IS IT .. UH... SAFE ?

OH, SURE! IT'S ONLY AT TOP SPEED THAT MY ENGINE CUTS OUT!...

OH!

... BUT EVEN THEN, THERE'S ALWAYS SOME CLEAR SPACE TO LAND IN... ER... **ALMOST** ALWAYS, ANYWAY!

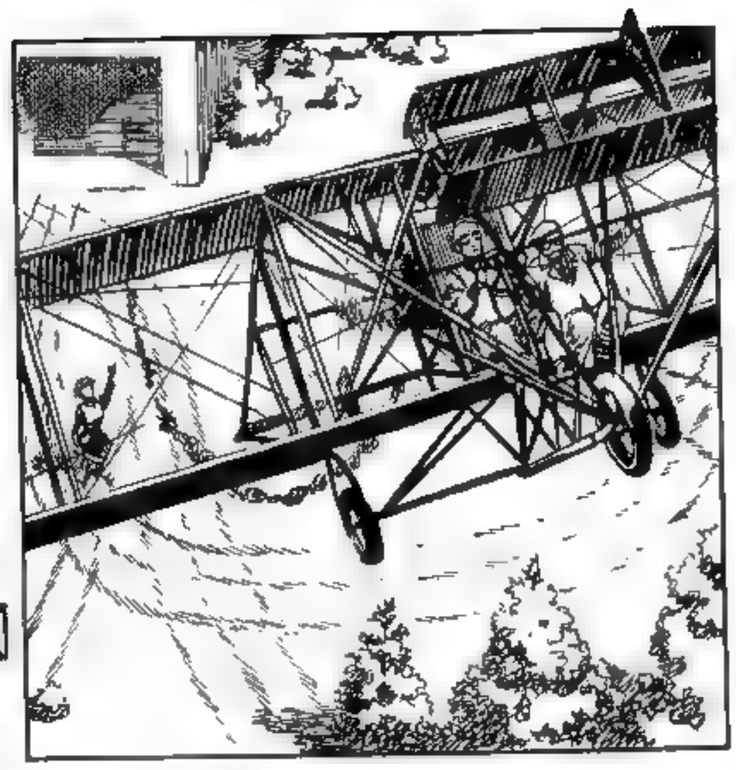
OH, DADDY — GO ON! **DO IT!**

BY GADFLIES — I WILL! COME ON... WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

EVANS

THERE'S NO REASON TO BE NERVOUS, MR. PRESNALL!... RELAX!
I...I... ULP...

YOU'LL FEEL FINE AS SOON AS WE GET OFF! READY?
... AS READY AS I'LL EVER... EVER... B..B...BE!



S...SAY... IT... IT IS FUN, ISN'T IT?
'ATTABOY, MR. P.! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT! LOOK! THERE'S THE TRAIN I WAS RACING WHEN I--UH--RAN YOU INTO THE DITCH!

MMM.. YES, YES... UH... DO YOU THINK YOU CAN... UH... BEAT IT?
YES, SIR ... IF MY ENGINE DOESN'T CUT OUT! SHALL WE TRY IT ?
YES— LET'S!

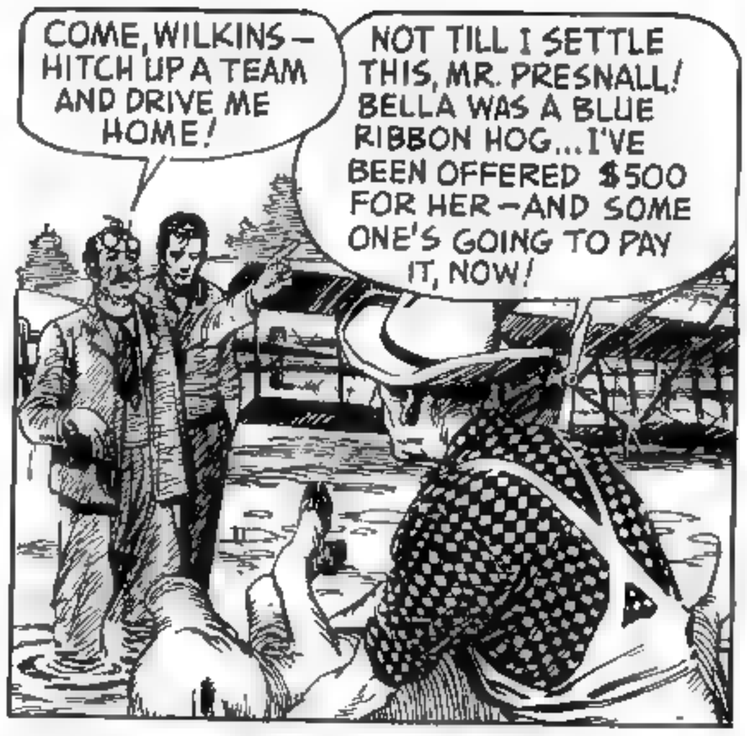
OOOOH..H...H/ NOT AGAIN! ...TOM!...
I KNOW... ON THE SHOVEL! THAT KID DO'KNOW WHEN HE'S LICKED!

SWIFT! WE'RE PULLING UP! WE'RE GAI—
WUPS! THERE GOES OUR MOTOR! HANG ON, MR. PRESNALL!... HANG ON!

SZOG!
OONK!
OONK!
HOWNK!

FOR THE FIFTH TIME BILLY SWIFT'S ENGINE HAS FAILED HIM IN A RACE WITH THE CRACK "FLYER" OF INTERSTATE RAILROADS, LANDING BILLY IN A PIG-PEN... AND BANKER PRESNALL ALONG WITH HIM!...

TAKE-YOUR-HANDS-OFF-ME-SIR! I DON'T EVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! I DON'T WANT NANCY TO SEE YOU AGAIN, EITHER! IS THAT CLEAR?
BELLA! OH, BELLA! OH! OH!...


COME, WILKINS— HITCH UP A TEAM AND DRIVE ME HOME!
NOT TILL I SETTLE THIS, MR. PRESNALL! BELLA WAS A BLUE RIBBON HOG... I'VE BEEN OFFERED $500 FOR HER—AND SOME ONE'S GOING TO PAY IT, NOW!

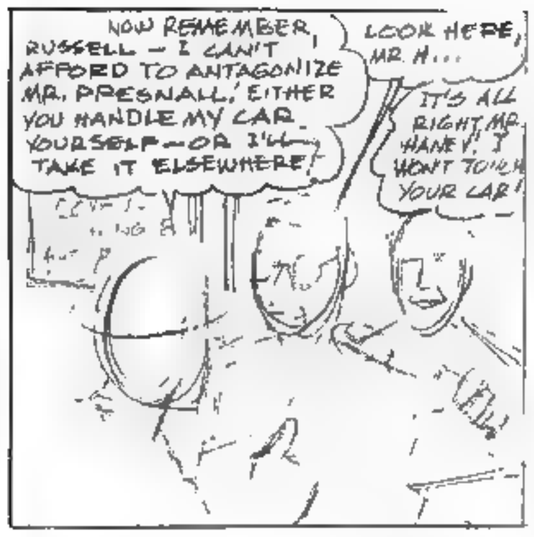
AT THE SWIFT HOME...

...THIS MAY COST US THE FARM, WILLIAM SWIFT! DIDN'T I FORBID YOU TO FOOL WITH THAT SILLY CONTRAPTION? NOW YOU GO AND APOLOGIZE!
AH, DAD... I HAVE... SO OFTEN I FEEL LIKE A VICTROLA! IT'S NO GOOD! ANYWAY, I STILL HAVE MY JOB WITH RUSS.

...AND AT COXEY'S SHOP NEXT MORNING...
MORNING, RUSS — AH— MR. HANEY! WE'LL HAVE THAT FORD OF YOURS DONE IN ABOUT TWO HOURS...
YOU WON'T, YOUNG MAN! RUSSELL—!
ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT, MR. HANEY! COME BACK ABOUT NOON!

WAIT, MR. HANEY... WHAT'S WRONG?
NEVER MIND, BILL! THE SHOP NEEDS A CLEANING... GO GET AT IT, WILL YOU?
RUSSELL! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE FOOLISH, ARE YOU?

NOW, SEE HERE, YOU...
WAIT, RUSS! WHAT'RE YOU TRYING TO SAY, SIR?
WHY, MR. PRESNALL HAS SERVED NOTICE. THAT THE BANK WILL WITHDRAW BACKING FROM ANYONE DEALING EVEN REMOTELY WITH YOU, YOUNG MAN! YOU'RE THROUGH IN THIS TOWN!
Ford


NOW REMEMBER, RUSSELL — I CAN'T AFFORD TO ANTAGONIZE MR. PRESNALL, EITHER YOU HANDLE MY CAR YOURSELF — OR I'LL TAKE IT ELSEWHERE!
LOOK HERE, MR. H...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MR. HANEY! I WON'T TOUCH YOUR CAR!

AH, THAT WEAK-KNEED OLD HEN! FOR TWO CENTS...
COOL DOWN, RUSS! THE POOR GUY'S PROBABLY NECK-DEEP IN DEBT TO MR. P.!

YEAH... IN THIS TOWN, WHO ISN'T? WELL... YOU CLEAN UP THE SHOP, I'LL FINISH THE CAR...
WAIT A MINUTE, RUSS! DIDN'T YOU GET THE WORD, TOO?

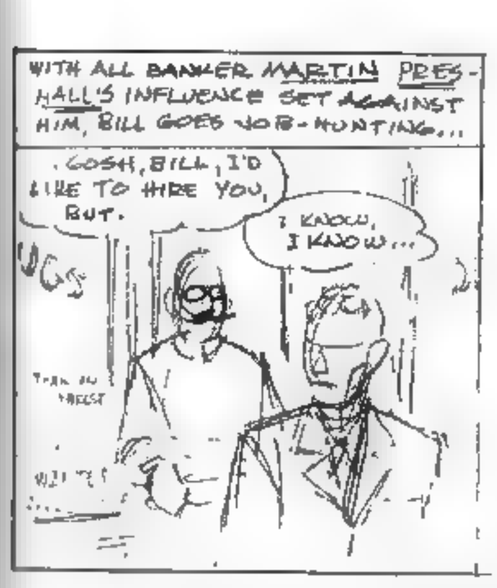
—UH—HOW'S THAT AGAIN, BILL?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN! YOU GOT CLOTHES TO DROP ME — DIDN'T YOU?

WELL — SO WHAT? I RUN THIS SHOP — NOT MARTIN PRESNALL!
SURE — SURE, BUT IF YOU BUCK HIM, IT'LL SOON BE AN EMPTY SHOP!

LISTEN, BILL — THAT GROUCHY OLD WALRUS CAN'T RUN MY LIFE! YOU'RE STAYING!
YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND, RUSS... BUT I'M LEAVING!

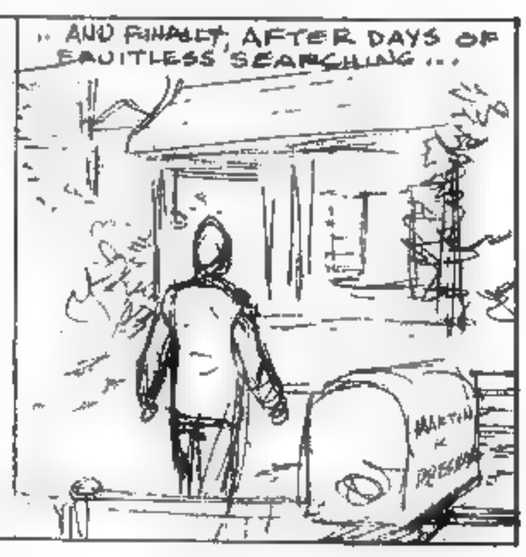
WHAT'RE YOU GOIN' TO DO? WHO DO YOU THINK'LL HIRE YOU...?
OH — I'LL FIND SOMETHING...

I HOPE...


WITH ALL BANKER MARTIN PRESNALL'S INFLUENCE SET AGAINST HIM, BILL GOES JOB-HUNTING...
GOSH, BILL, I'D LIKE TO HIRE YOU, BUT.
I KNOW, I KNOW...

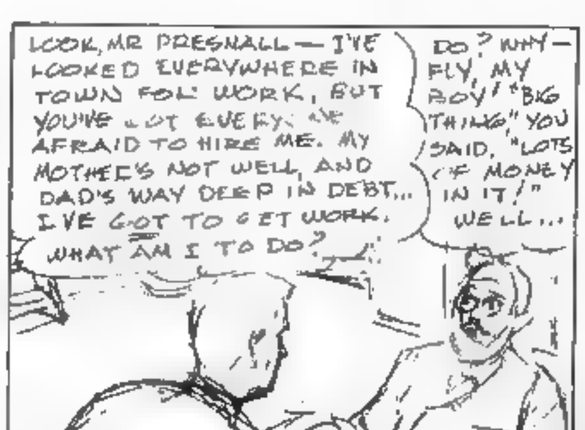
...LOOK, SON — EVEN THE SAWDUST AND SPLINTERS AROUND HERE ARE MORTGAGED TO OLD PRESNALL, SO YOU SEE HOW IT IS.
SURE, MR. LARSEN, THANKS ANYWAY...

...SORRY, WILLY...
I'D LIKE TO BOY, BUT—
HIDE YOU? NOT A CHANCE!
Y'SEE BILL, MR. PRESNALL...

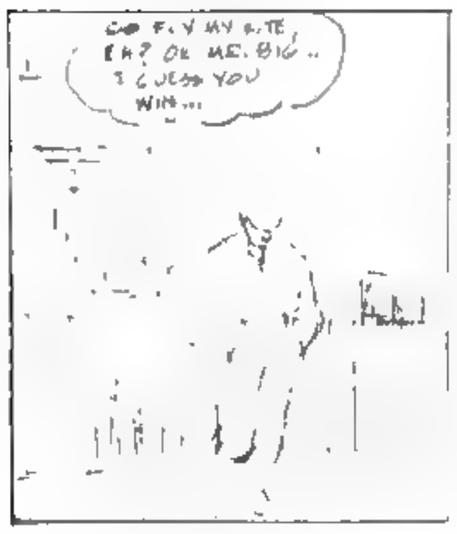

...AND FINALLY, AFTER DAYS OF FRUITLESS SEARCHING...

BILLY! WHY AREN'T YOU AT WORK?
IS YOUR FATHER AT HOME, NANCY?
OH, YES COME IN.

DAD, BILLY SWIFT WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU.
OH? VERY WELL! YOU RUN ALONG, NAN!


LOOK, MR PRESNALL — I'VE LOOKED EVERYWHERE IN TOWN FOR WORK, BUT YOU'VE GOT EVERYONE AFRAID TO HIRE ME. MY MOTHER'S NOT WELL, AND DAD'S WAY DEEP IN DEBT... I'VE GOT TO GET WORK. WHAT AM I TO DO?
DO? WHY — FLY, MY BOY! "BIG THING," YOU SAID, "LOTS OF MONEY IN IT!" WELL...

...NOW GO FLY YOUR KITE!


CAN F.Y MY MATE, EH? OL ME. BIG.. I GUESS YOU WIN...

DAD-WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO BILLY SWIFT?
HOW DOES THAT CONCERN YOU YOUNG LADY?

BECAUSE I LIKE HIM! HE'S THE NICEST BOY I KNOW
NICE!! HE MADE ME — ME, YOUR FATHER, - A LAUGHINGSTOCK!

OH, DADDY! NO ONE WAS HURT! HAVEN'T YOU ANY SENSE OF HUMOR?
OH, YES! OH, YES! HE MADE 'EM ALL LAUGH AT ME NOW I'M HAVING MY LAUGH!

BETTER BE CAREFUL, DADDY! LAST LAUGHS SOMETIMES BACKFIRE!
DON'T TALK BACK TO ME, YOUNG LADY! AND DON'T LET ME SEE THAT FOOL AGAIN OR I'LL TAKE MEASURES!

I THOU. HT HE'D'VE COOLED DOWN BY NOW, DAD PUT I GUESS I'LL HAVE TO GO AWAY AND GET WORK...
A LOT OF HELP THAT'LL GIVE ME! YOU'LL MAKE ENOUGH TO PAY BOARD, AND A LITTLE TO WORKING.. THAT'S ALL!

THERE! THERE'S THE INFERNAL THING THAT CAUSED T ALL AND IT WAS GOING TO MAKE US RICH! HA! I'LL...
NO, DAD— DON'T DESTROY —, MAYBE WE CAN SELL IT FOR SCRAP. I'LL SURE NEVER FLY IT AGAIN, NOW. WHA—
BILLY! BILLY SWIFT!

I GOTTA IMPORTANT MESSAGE FR YA, BILLY!

LETTER'S F'M UNCLE RUSS, BILLY. HE GIMME A WHOLE HALF DOLLAR, AN' I GALLOPED ALL THE WAY!
HE WANTS ME IN TOWN, FAST—MAY HAVE A JOB FOR ME!
IT LIKE TO VE KILT OL TURK, HERE!
WELL, HURRY THEN!!

SOON...
HI, RUSS! WHAT'S UP?
HI, BILL! YOU SURE GOT HERE FAST! LISTEN... D'YOU GET WORK YET.

NO... NOTHING... I THOUGHT...
D'YOU WANT TO COME BACK WITH ME?

AW, RUSS — I CAN'T. WE'D BOTH BE OUT, THEN... BUT THANKS, ANYWAY...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT, BILL — BUT WAIT! MEET JOHN SANDERS. JOHN HAS SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU...
BILL...

..DO YOU WANT TO WORK FOR ME?
WAIT, ABOU!
IT'S HAULING COAL! I'LL PAY YOU WHAT RUSS DID — BUT IT'S HARD WORK
DO I!
I'M NOT AFRAID OF HARD WORK.. BUT WHAT ABOUT MR. PRESNALL?

PRESNALL? I DON'T OWE HIM A BEAN, AND IF HE TRIES PUSHING ME AROUND THAT TENDER HIDE OF HIS WILL GO COLD THIS WINTER!

WELL, GOSH — HOW CAN I THANK YOU?
NO THANKS! I NEED A GOOD MAN BUT MAYBE WHEN OUR WINTER RUSH AT THE COALYARD IS OVER YOU CAN TEACH ME TO FLY!
LET'S GO TO MY PLACE FOR SUPPER. I'VE A BIG IDEA TO SUGGEST...

MEANWHILE AT THE PRESNALL HOME...
NAN — THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN MOONING AROUND, I'M AFRAID YOU THINK MORE OF THAT SWIFT LOUT THAN IS GOOD FOR YOU!
DAD, I COULDN'T CHANGE THAT IF I WANTED TO.. AND NEITHER CAN YOU!

GOOD NEWS, DAD! I GO TO WORK AT SANDERS' COAL YARD TOMORROW MORNING!

GOOD ... BUT WILL YOU EARN ANYTHING?

A LITTLE LESS THAN IN THE BANK— BUT I'M SATISFIED!

WELL, MAYBE IF YOU KEEP AWAY FROM FLYING MACHINES, YOU MAY GET BACK WITH PRESNALL SOMEDAY..

OH, NO! I'VE GOT TO FIX MY FLYER, NOW. I'M TO TEACH RUSS AND MR. SANDERS TO FLY, TOO!

BILL, IT'S WORRY OVER YOU AND THE SCRAPES YOU GET INTO WITH THAT KITE THAT'S RUINING YOUR MOTHER'S HEALTH!

GEE, DAD... I'M SORRY IF THAT'S, SO. I GUESS YOU'D NEVER UNDERSTAND, BUT FLYING GETS INTO YOUR BLOOD. I CAN'T GIVE IT UP...

RUSS AND ME, SANDERS AND I TALKED OVER AN IDEA. THEY'LL PAY OFF WILKINS, IN RETURN I'LL TEACH THEM TO FLY, THEN IN THE SPRING, WE'LL ENTER ALL THE AIR MEETS WE CAN...

WE HOPE TO EARN ENOUGH, AND LEARN ENOUGH TO DESIGN OUR OWN 'PLANES.. BUILD 'EM... SELL 'EM... TEACH FLYING...

BILLY - BILLY! PEOPLE THINK YOU'RE CRAZY AS IT IS! IF THEY COULD HEAR YOU TALKING LIKE THIS...

I DON'T CARE, DAD! WE'LL SHOW 'EM ALL, SOMEDAY...

AT THE PRESNALL HOME IN TOWN..

MOTHER - I DON'T LIKE TO DISAGREE WITH DADDY. WHY IS HE SO UNREASONABLE?

YOU MUST FORGIVE YOUR FATHER, DEAR. HE'S A GOOD MAN AT HEART - BUT HE'S BECOME PRETTY IMPORTANT IN OUR TOWN... AND I'M AFRAID EVEN MORE SO IN HIS OWN MIND!

I'M AFRAID IT'LL TAKE SOMETHING PRETTY DRASTIC TO BRING HIM BACK TO REALITY..!

I'VE GOT MY FLYING MACHINE PRETTY WELL FIXED UP AGAIN MR SANDERS, A FEW MORE NIGHTS OF WORK...

NO HURRY, BILL! NOBODY BUT A DUCK WOULD FLY IN WEATHER LIKE THIS.. AND THE BUSINESS IS GETTING TOO HEAVY, TOO! HERE ARE TODAY'S ORDERS...

SOON...

BANG

OH — MORNING, MR. PRESNALL!

HUMPH!

HELLO - SANDERS? I SEE YOU HIRED YOUNG SWIFT! YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT HIM..?

YES - I'VE HEARD. SO—

YOU'RE GOING TO KEEP HIM ON?

I SURE AM, MARTIN. HE'S A MIGHTY GOOD WORKER!-

SUPPOSE I WITHDRAW MY BUSINESS?

YOUR CHOICE! NEXT NEAREST COAL YARD IS 14 MILES. IT MAY COST A BIT MORE...

SANDERS

HMMMMF! ALL RIGHT... BUT DON'T SEND HIM TO MY HOUSE! AND KEEP HIM AWAY FROM MY DAUGHTER!

MMMM... HOW OLD IS NANCY, NOW?

EIGHTEEN— WHY?

SHE'LL LISTEN TO ME!?

I'D THINK SHE'D HAVE A MIND OF HER OWN!

MARTIN, YOU WOULDN'T BE A BAD EGG IF YOU'D TAKE OFF THAT HOME-MADE HALO AND BE HUMAN, WHY DON'T YOU TRY —?

BAH!!

LATER...

HEKE, BILL - OLD PRESNALL CALLED... WANTS YOU TO HAUL A TON UP TO HIS PLACE RIGHT AWAY!

?

YOU'RE SURE MR. PRESNALL ASKED FOR ME TO DELIVER HIS COAL?

YOU DON'T THINK I'D KID YOU, DO YOU, BILL? GO ON-HAUL IT ON UP!

OH, BILLY—I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN!

YOU'D BETTER GO IN, NANCY. YOU'LL CATCH COLD OUT HERE IN THE AIR...

I DON'T CARE! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU— AND YOU NEVER COME AROUND. DON'T YOU LIKE ME ANYMORE...?

AW, IT'S NOT THAT, NAN. I WORK DAYS AT THIS, AND NIGHTS TRYING TO FIX MY FLYER THERE'S JUST NO SPARE TIME...

...ANYWAY, I'M ONLY TROUBLE FOR YOU, THE WAY YOUR DAD FEELS!

OH, SOB-

LATER THAT DAY...

I HEARD ABOUT YOU CRYING YOUR EYES OUT TO THAT SWIFT, LOUT, YOUNG LADY! AND AFTER WHAT I TOLD YOU—

OH, DAD— BE REASONABLE!

REASONABLE! LISTEN, I'M GOING TO HAVE YOUR MOTHER TAKE YOU UPSTATE TO AUNT MARTHA'S TILL YOU GET OVER THIS SILLY CRUSH! I'LL GIVE YOU JUST TOMORROW TO GET PACKED UP!

BUT DAD...!

NO BUTS YOU'RE GOING!

...AND AT SANDERS'...

RAIN, RAIN, RAIN, EH, BILL? I'M ABOUT READY TO QUACK! MUCH MORE AND THERE'S GONNA BE A FLOOD!

THAT'S RIGHT I HEAR THE RIVER'S 'WAY UP ALREADY OVER AT GORHAM. GOOD THING WE'RE HIGH UP AND FAR AWAY!

SPEAKING OF THE DEVIL— THERE HE GOES NOW, WITH HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER!

YES...TO THE RAILWAYS AT JO. HE'S SENDING NAN AWAY FOR A WHILE

NANCY, DON'T YOU EVEN NOTICE THAT LOUT!

MARTIN, AREN'T YOU BEING RIDICULOUS PACKING US OFF IN WEATHER LIKE THIS BECAUSE OF SILLY SPITE?

IT'S MORE THAN SPITE, IDA! DO YOU THINK I WANT MY DAUGHTER INVOLVED WITH A FOOL WHO FANCIES HE'S AN EAGLE? THIS WAY SHE'LL HAVE A CHANCE TO THINK!

I'VE THOUGHT ENOUGH, DAD I WON'T CHANGE...

MAN... LOOK AT THIS GOO! THE WAGONS GO IN HUB-DEEP! IT SHOULD'VE HARDENED A MONTH AGO, EH, BILL?

YES, SIR! THERE'D HAVE BEEN NO FLYING, THEN— AND I WOULDN'T HAVE MR. PRESNALL ON MY NECK!

WELL SEE!... I PHONED MARTHA TO MEET YOU. THE SCHEDULE SAYS 8'40, BUT YOU'LL PROBABLY BE LATER, WITH THIS CONFOUNDED WEATHER!

ALL RIGHT, MARTIN. I HOPE YOU'LL BE SATISFIED. 'BYE.

GOOD BYE, FATHER!

ALL ABOOOARD...!

GOOD BYE! TAKE CARE— WHAT-?

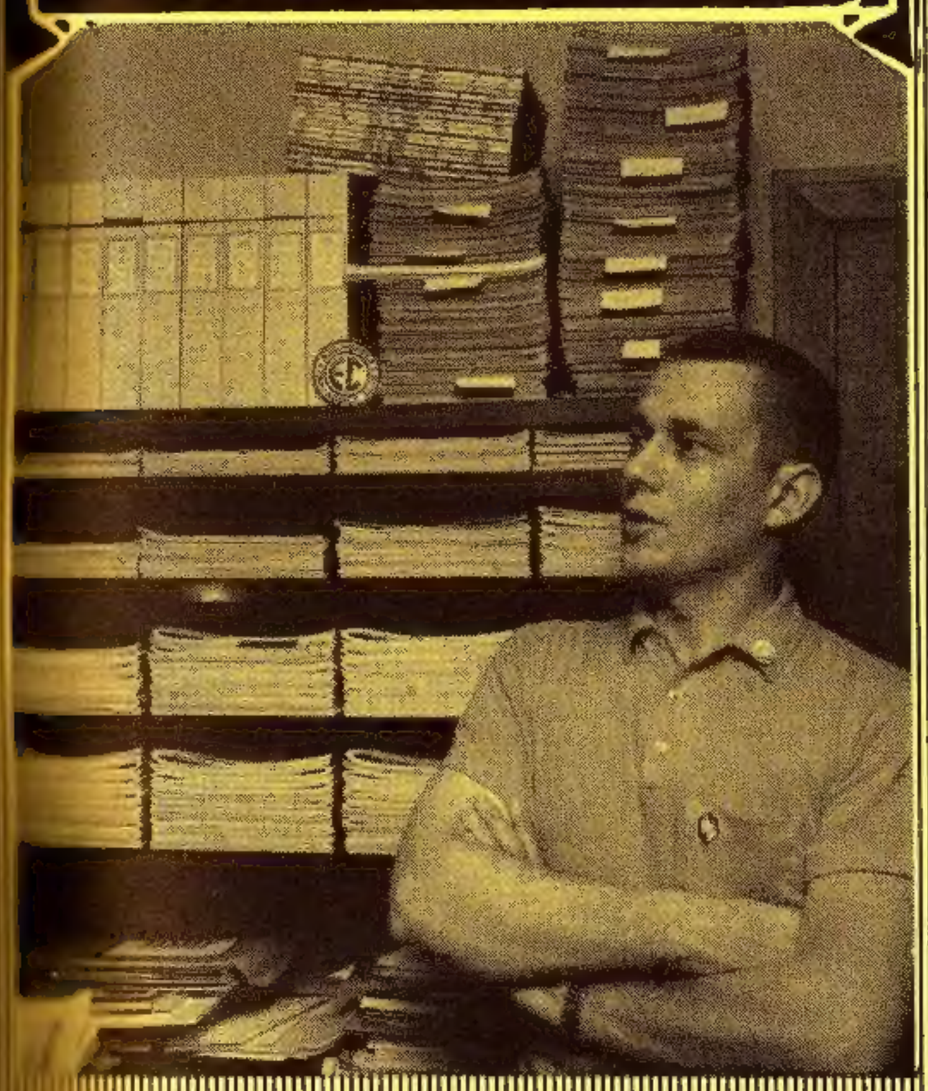
STOP!

HEY—STOP! HOLD THAT TRAIN!...

"...THE BRIDGE IS WASHED OUT UP AHEAD...!

The EC Fan-Fic Issue.

FEATURING...



e.c. joe

I was born during the ides of October, 1938 in St. Louis, Mo. With the exception of a year in Wisconsin toward the end of the second World War, we stayed in St. Louis until after I'd finished the 9th Grade. During the summer of '53 my family and I moved to Los Alamos, New Mexico. December 31, 1966 saw my plighting my troth with Patricia Ann Mumford of Urbana, Ohio (currently a Head-Start teacher to Tewa Indian children). (I have worked as a clerk, X-ray technician, Photostat operator, offset press operator, operator and repairman for 3 different models of Xerox copiers, microfilm technician, high-temperature furnace operator, and presently as a uranium-recovery technician.

I read my first EC comic book about the middle of 1950. It was the second issue of Weird Fantasy (Vol. 1, No. 14, July-Aug. 1950), for, then as now, my main interest lies in science-fiction. Almost instantly I began badgering the kids in my neighborhood--those I traded comics with--for any other copies of Weird Science or Weird Fantasy they might have or could locate. The first EC I bought on the stands was Weird Fantasy #8 with a Feldstein cover inspired by "The Slave Ship" in that issue. (But Wood's "The Enemies of the Colony" was the best all around story by far that issue.) In this period Feldstein quite effectively used his 'wooden' figures to achieve an extremely high degree of the old 'Sense of Wonder'. Another vivid image from that time was the Wally Wood written and illustrated "The Dark Side of the Moon"--my vote as one of the best comic book science-fiction stories to date.

I think the biggest thrill of my life--to that point--was a 'sweep' thru all the local stores that carried comics, and, apparently due to a distributors' error, being able to come home with a new Weird Science and 2 different issues of Weird Fantasy that I hadn't read! Altho my main love was science-fiction. I did read most of the other EC titles--if I could get them by trading... (My allowance all went for the science-fiction comics that literally glutted the newsstands at that time.) My earliest memory of a non-science-fiction EC was that of reading Vault of Horror #13. But, in this period--and prior to it--I never saw a copy of Crypt of Terror, or any of the pre-Trend titles.

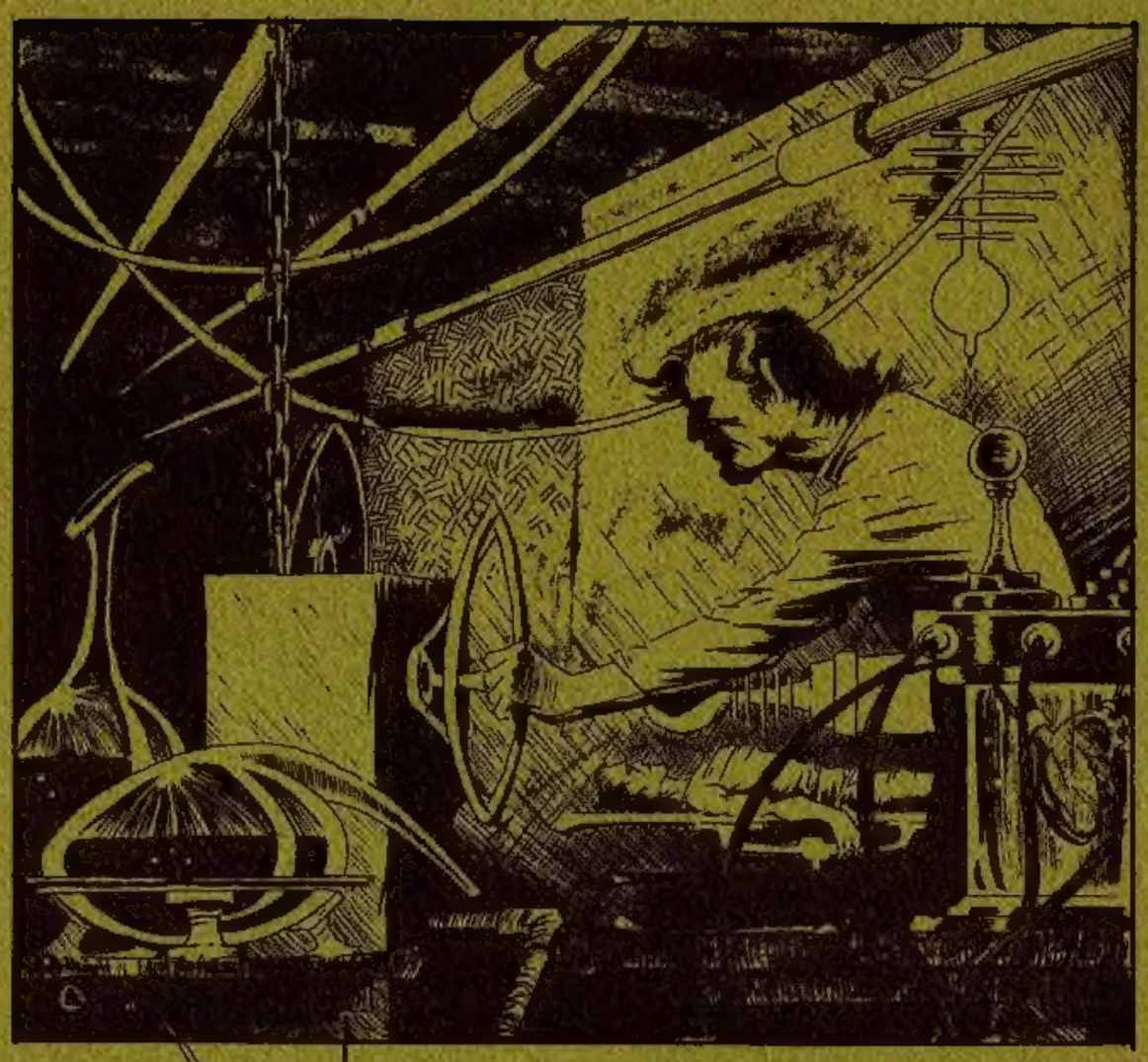
As collecting has always been more important to me than 'fanac', I'd probably be classed as a 'fringe fan'. I've been loosely associated with Bill Pearson's SATA, Jack Cascio's REALM OF FANTASY, Larry Byrd's TERROR. I've had minor things appear in George Bibby's FANTASY COLLECTOR, Don & Maggie Thompson's COMIC ART, Fred Cook's BRONZE SHADOWS, Bill Pearson's SATA, plus a few printed l. o. c.'s. (A short satire should see print about issue #11 of Bill Spicer's GRAPHIC STORY MAGAZINE.) (I'd also written an article in defense of EC, condemning the methods of Dr. Wertham. To date, it has caused the demise of at least 3 fanzines--they fold before they can ((rather than)) print it. This 'turkey' is now in the hands of SQUA TRONT's editor...) At last count, I subscribe to or otherwise receive an even 2 dozen fanzines and semi-professional magazines. All in addition to sending for sample copies of anything that looks interesting. Current interests include collecting damn-near anything that doesn't move of its own accord--basically printed matter and artwork.

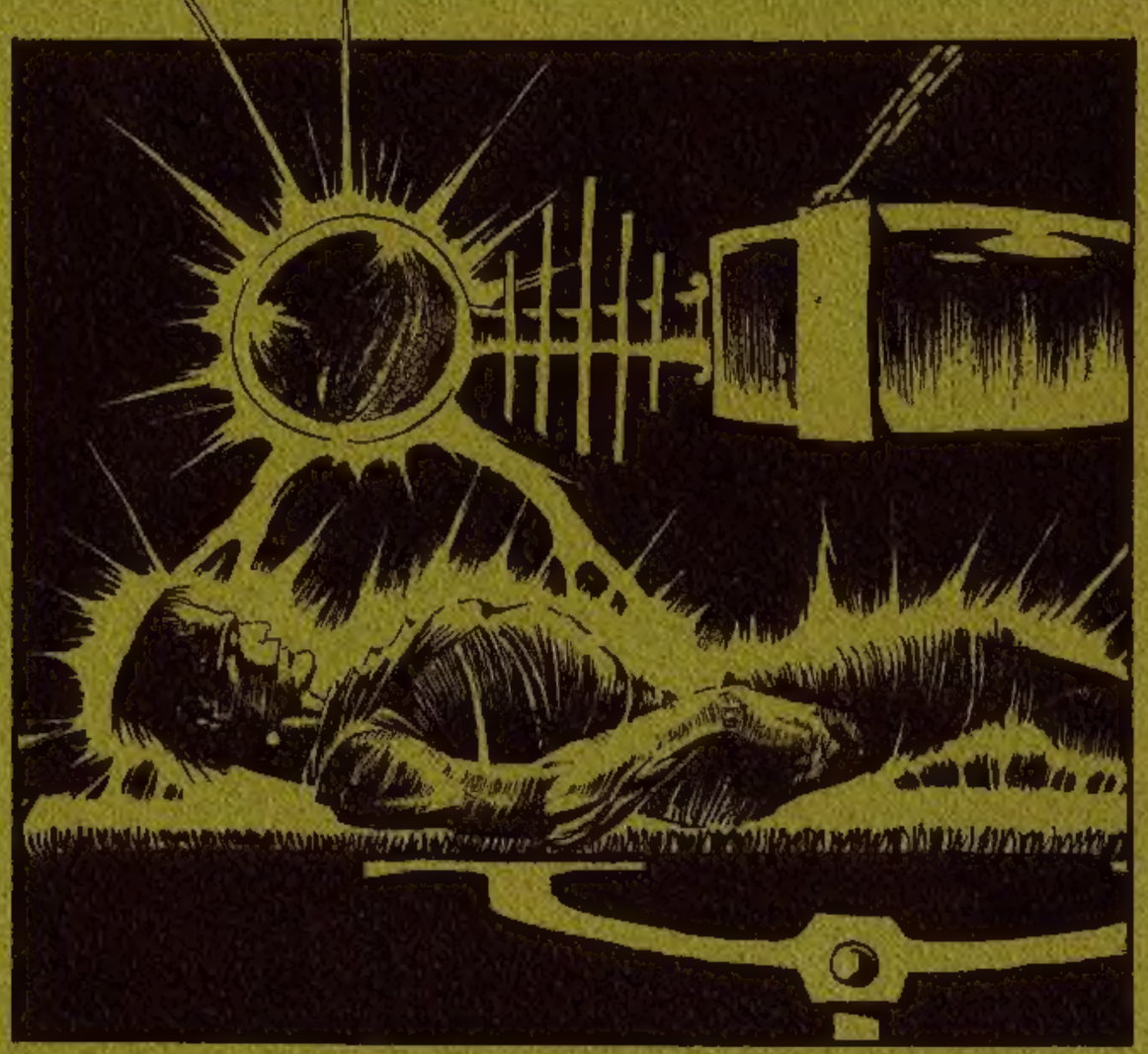
--Joe Vucenic--
6/1/69, Los Alamos, N. M.

NIGHTMASTER

to Bob & the gang
at Squa Tront
Best Wishes
Berni Wrightson

If you fans have not picked up a copy of this fine comic magazine, then you don't know what you are missing! Best of all, it is completely illustrated by Berni Wrightson! After the third SHOWCASE issue, NIGHTMASTER will be given his own magazine and Berni will be doing the covers as well...so DON'T MISS A SINGLE ISSUE!!!!





Wrightson

CRANDALL